DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 343 701 PS 020 425

AUTHOR	Davies, Don; And Others
TITLE	A Portrait of Schools Reaching Out: Report of a Survey of Practices and Policies of Family-Community-School Collaboration. Report No. 1.
INSTITUTION	Center on Families Communities, Schools and Children's Learning.; Institute for Responsive Education, Boston, Mass.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Health and Human Services, Rockville, Md. Project Share.; Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Feb 92
CONTRACT	R117Q00031
NOTE	182p.; Type, throughout document, contains "filled" letters.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Cooperation; Educational Policy; *Elementary Schools; Elementary Secondary Education; * Family School Relationship; National Surveys; *Outreach Programs; Questionnaires; *School Activities; *School Community Relationship; *Secondary Schools
IDENTIFIERS	League of Schools Reaching Out

ABSTRACT

The League of Schools Reaching Out is a national project designed to study ways in which a family-community-school collaboration can contribute to school reform. This document reports the results of a 1991 survey of 42 schools belonging to the league. Results concerning strategies and practices of collaboration indicate that: (1) the level of activities that reach out to the community is high; (2) many schools are redefining their service role; (3) traditional strategies, such as parent-teacher conferences, remain the predominant and most effective strategies; (4) schools are exploring new strategies; (5) school improvement councils and parent associations are found in 80 percent of the schools; (6) schools rely on school district funds to support family and community programs; and (7) few schools have comprehensive programs that address all family and community needs. Results related to the impact of school policy on school practices indicate that school programs are affected by policies. However, the effect of policy is obscure to many at the school level. Results also indicate that few principals employ Chapter 1 funds to support parent involvement activities. The policies and practices of five schools in Boston, Cleveland, Miami, San Diego, and the District of Columbia are profiled. A 45-item reference list is provided. Appendixes include copies of the three survey instruments. (BC)

CENTER ON FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, SCHOOLS & CHILDREN'S LEARNING

A PORTRAIT OF SCHOOLS REACHING OUT

Report of a Survey of Practices and Policies of Family-Community-School Collaboration

Don Davies, Patricia Burch, and Vivian R. Johnson

Report No. 1 / February 1992

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Published by the Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning. The Center is supported by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational, Research and Improvement (R117Q00031) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The opinions expressed are the authors' own and do not represent OERI or HHS position on policies.

CENTER ON FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, SCHOOLS & CHILDREN'S LEARNING

A Consortium of Researchers from:
Boston University, Institute for Responsive Education,
The Johns Hopkins University, The University of Illinois,
Wheelock College, and Yale University

Don Davies, Co-Director
Joyce L. Epstein, Co-Director

The nation's schools must do more to improve the education of all children, but schools cannot do this alone. More will be accomplished if families and communities work with children, with each other, and with schools to promote successful students.

The mission of this Center is to conduct research, evaluations, policy analyses, and dissemination to produce new and useful knowledge about how families, schools, and communities influence student motivation, learning, and development. A second important goal is to improve the connections between and among these major social institutions.

Two research programs guide the Center's work: the Program on the Early Years of Childhood, covering children aged 0-10 through the elementary grades; and the Program on the Years of Early and Late Adolescence, covering youngsters aged 11-19 through the middle and high school grades.

Research on family, school, and community connections must be conducted to understand more about all children and all families, not just those who are economically and educationally advantaged or already connected to school and community resources. The Center's projects pay particular attention to the diversity of family cultures and backgrounds and to the diversity in family, school, and community practices that support families in helping children succeed across the years of childhood and adolescence. Projects also examine policies at the federal, state, and local levels that produce effective partnerships.

A third program of Institutional Activities includes a wide range of dissemination projects to extend the Center's national leadership. The Center's work will yield new information, practices, and policies to promote partnerships among families, communities, and schools to benefit children's learning.

ABSTRACT

This report details the results of a survey of schools belonging to the League of Schools Reaching Out, a national network of schools organized by the Institute for Responsive Education (IRE), a Boston-based national non-profit organization. Member schools in this network work with IRE to improve their programs of family-school-community partnership and are committed to the concept of "success for all students."

When this survey was conducted, the League had forty-five member schools. Forty-two returned the survey and data from those schools form the basis for this report.

The analyses of the survey results and data from follow-up phone interviews and site visits seeks answers for two major questions:

1. What are the strategies and practices of school-community-family collaboration in urban public schools which have a stated intent to "reach out" for such collaboration?

2. How do formal and informal policies influence these strategies and practices?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is a report on a survey of schools who are members of the League of Schools Reaching Out. The writing of this report would have been impossible without the cooperation, honesty, and hard work of principals, teachers, other school staff, and parents of the schools surveyed.

The League of Schools Reaching Out is a national project designed to test and study ways that a family-community-school collaboration can contribute to school restructuring or reform aimed directly at increasing the academic and social success of all children, especially those the society labels as "at-risk." The network of schools was begun in the spring of 1990 with a national videoconference beamed from Boston to twenty mini-conferences across the country and carried live by The Learning Channel.

At the time of the survey in the spring of 1991 there were about 45 members (42 responded to the survey). It now has 70 schools in 23 states, plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. Most are urban public schools (elementary and secondary). After the survey was initiated, a small number of private schools and rural schools were admitted. These will be included in future Center projects, but are not a part of the sample for the study reported herein. To support national network activities and local projects of League schools, IRE has received support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Pew Charitable Trusts, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Plan for Social Excellence, Aaron Diamond Foundation, Leon Lowenstein Foundation, and the Boston Globe Foundation. The League staff is headed by Etta Green Johnson.

The authors of this report would also like to thank Nick Donohue of the Citywide Educational Coalition (Boston) for his help authoring the case study of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School and Moy Ogilvie, Karen Usdan, Kate Reid, Ameetha Palanki and Andrea Perrault for their help in gathering the survey results.

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Chapter 1

SCHOOLS REACHING OUT

Background

In nearly every American city some urban public schools are "reaching out" to families and communities both to get and to give more help. They are doing this in response to the sea of educational, social, and economic problems children, families, and communities face today and to myriad outside forces and initiatives -- local, state, and national laws, mandates, reports, grants, and projects.

The material in these pages is a portrait of about 42 such urban schools in the winter and spring of the 1990-91 school year. These are schools that voluntarily applied for and were accepted for membership in a part of a national network called the League of Schools Reaching Out organized by the Institute for Responsive Education. They are clearly not typical of all urban public schools, the majority of which do not appear to have not embraced or started to put into practice the ideas of school-family-community collaboration which characterize League schools. We believe that the schools in this survey have much in common with hundreds of other schools which are a part of similar state and local networks promoting reform, including for example those affiliated with other networks and programs that are involved in the change processes developed by James Comer at Yale, the Accelerated Schools program headed by Henry Levin at Stanford; the Schools for the 21st Century project of Edward Ziegler at Yale.

In addition, current literature reports on scores of individual schools and projects which have decided to break away from "typical" school practice to "reach out" in a variety of ways. (See Lionotos, 1991 for descriptions of such schools. Several other of the Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning researchers are working in other such schools. For a description of these projects, please write the Center. Also see D'Angelo & Adler, 1991 and Clinchy, 1991).

The schools in our sample are representative of urban public schools in important ways: they serve many children from poor families, including many who are immigrants and whose grasp of the English language is limited; they are in cities and states with severe economic problems; they are in school districts confronting high levels of public criticism for their institutional failures; they typically suffer from some poor working conditions, staff turnover, high student mobility, they are often in neighborhoods affected substantially by homelessness, crime, violence, drugs, alcohol and other health problems such as AIDS and "crack babies."

Major Questions

In this study, we sought answers to two major questions:

1. What are the strategies and practices of school- community-family collaboration in urban public schools which have a stated intent to "reach out" for such collaboration?

2. How do formal and informal policies influence these strategies and practices?

We also sought to identify other developments, ideas and questions needing further exploration in more intensive studies by the Center on Families and other scholars.

Conceptual Framework

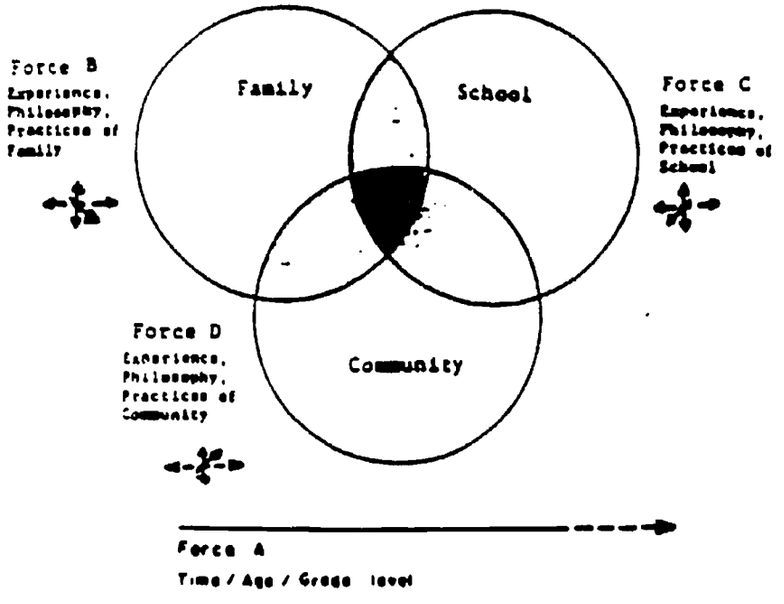
The study views the "interinstitutional connections of the school, family, and community as a set of overlapping spheres of influence on children's learning and development." This framework was developed by Epstein (1987) and Davies (1989) and many others, drawing on the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (1979), the sociological perspectives of families as educators of Leichter (1974), the sociological perspectives on the connections between institutions and individuals (Litwak & Meyer 1974), the partnership thesis advanced by Seeley (1981), and the long tradition of sociological and psychological research on school and family environments and their effects (Coleman, 1987; Lightfoot, 1978; Comer, 1980; Epstein and McPartland, 1979; and many others).

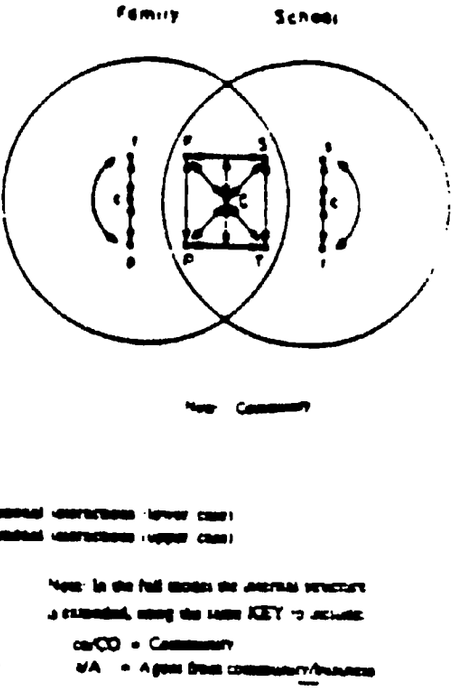
The framework of this study comes from the mission statement of the Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning which asserts: The nation's schools can do more to improve the education of all children. More will be accomplished if families and communities work with schools and with each other to promote successful students. (Center on Families, 1990).

FIGURE 1

Overlapping Spheres of Influence of Family, School, Community on Children's Learning

(External and Internal Structures of the Theoretical Model)





(from Epstein, 1987, 1988)

The Center's theoretical framework of overlapping spheres of influence is designed to encourage research on specific "connections in multiple environments and research that uses diverse methodologies and perspectives."
The framework facilitates our approach in this study which seeks to trace the influences of policies, programs, practices, and context or environment. Policies and practices of family-community-school collaboration are variables which can be altered by policymakers and/or practitioners. Hence, the findings of this kind of study have potentially practical implications.

Policies, Programs, and Environment

We define policies as: aims and purposes -- intent -- sometimes codified or formalized in laws, rules, resolutions, mandates, funding requirements, school district statements, annual plans and reports, and budgets and sometimes informal in the form of the aims and purposes of a) individuals in positions of power (e.g., superintendents, principals, heads of parent associations, or community agencies) or b) organizations or groups of individuals (e.g., teachers unions, school site councils, community organizations, businesses involved in the schools).

We view policies -- formal and informal -- at four levels: 1) national, 2) state, 3) city and school district and 4) individual school and its community. These levels are seen as sometimes interconnected and overlapping; sometimes coherent and reinforcing, sometimes contradictory or ambiguous.

We see the programs discussed in this report as strategies and actions which seek to realize the intents embodied in policies. We categorize the programs in a six-part typology, adapted from Epstein's five-part typology. These are:

TYPE 1 SCHOOL HELP FOR FAMILIES. The basic obligations of parents (families). This refers to schools providing assistance to families in relation to their responsibilities for children's health and safety; supervision, discipline, and guidance for children at each age level; and positive home conditions that support school learning and behavior appropriate for each grade level.

TYPE 2 SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION. The basic obligations of schools for communication from school to home about school programs and children's progress, including letters, memos, reports cards, newsletters, conferences.

Type 3 FAMILY HELP FOR SCHOOLS. Refers to the involvement in school of parent and community volunteers who assist teachers, administrators, and children in classrooms and other areas of the school. It also refers to parents and others who come to the school to support and watch student performances, sports, or other events.

Type 4 INVOLVEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT HOME. Involvement in learning activities at home refers to parent-initiated or child-initiated requests for help and, particularly, to ideas from teachers for parents to monitor or assist their own children at home in learning activities that can be coordinated with the children's classroom.

TYPE 5 INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE, DECISION-MAKING, AND ADVOCACY. Refers to parents and other community residents in advisory,

decision-making, or advocacy roles in parent associations, advisory committees, school improvement or school site councils. It also refers to parent and community activists in independent advocacy groups that monitor the schools or work for school improvement.

TYPE 6 COLLABORATION AND EXCHANGES WITH THE COMMUNITY. Refers to involvement of any of the institutions that share some responsibility for children's development and success. This includes programs that provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and their families, and other arrangements that draw on community resources to support children's learning (Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning, 1990).

Since both policies and programs are embedded in and continually influenced by their environment we use a three-part framework to examine the study's findings: policy, program, and environment. By environment we mean the cultural, social, and political context of which the school is a part. The environment has local, state, and national (and, indeed, international) elements.

This is an emerging model which has grown out of previous studies and projects of the Institute for Responsive Education including the cross-national study of parents and schools in Portugal and Boston (Davies, et al., 1988) and the Schools Reaching Out study and project in Boston and New York.

Procedures and Limitations

A. Procedures

There were three data gathering components to the survey discussed in this report:

1) a mail survey to all of the members of the League of Schools Reaching Out (as of December 1990);

2) telephone interviews with selected schools responding to the mail survey;

3) field visits by project staff to eight cities.

Survey

The basic survey instrument (Appendix A) was developed by project staff and was field tested with several principals from League of Schools Reaching out member schools in Boston, Cambridge, and Chelsea, Massachusetts. After revisions based on the field test results, the instrument was mailed to the principals in fifty-two schools. The survey involved two major components: a program specific questionnaire and an opinion section. The program

specific questionnaire was completed by the principal. The opinion section was to be completed separately by the principal, a program staff member; and at least one "involved" parent. Forty-two schools returned the survey.

The data are descriptive of what the principals say the schools are doing but do not reveal how many families were reached, or how well the programs are working for the families participating. These data can not be analyzed to pull out the effects the policies, programs or practices have on students.

Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews were conducted with twenty-three principals from the sample of 42 schools. The principals were chosen because they indicated that they used Chapter 1 funds for parent involvement activities on the written survey. As the largest compensatory education program with a strong mandate for parent involvement, Chapter 1 holds great potential for supporting school-home community partnerships. By examining school-level use of Chapter 1 funds, we hoped to identify points of coordination and fragmentation between policy and program. The intent of the interviews was to gather information from principals on 1) the specific use of Chapter 1 funds and 2) factors affecting the use of funds.

Field Visits

Field visits by four staff members were made to eight cities:

Data gathering over one to four days in each city focused on League schools which were a part of the survey. In addition, a small number of private schools and non-League public schools were chosen because they were not thought to be involved in substantial collaborative activity.

Five of the League schools were chosen for mini case studies (See Chapter 4). Data from the private schools and non-League schools will be drawn upon in a limited way in Chapter 5 and again in the discussion in Chapter 6.

Location of Site Visits

Boston -- one League school; one private school; one public contrast school.

Chelsea, Massachusetts - one League school (Early Learning Center).

Cleveland - two League schools; one public contrast school; one private school.

Dade County (Miami) - one League school, one private school, one public contrast school.

New York City - one League school.

Prince George's County, Maryland - two League schools.

San Diego - two League schools, one private school, one public contrast school.

Washington, D.C. - one League school, two private schools.

B. Limitations

Each data gathering instrument was tested in the field. However, in the process of implementing the study, a number of limitations were revealed. These limitations are discussed briefly below.

Survey

Our data on school-leveled programs and practices was influenced in several ways. 1) Program data were being gathered at a time when schools were competing for grants based upon comprehensiveness of parent involvement programs. 2) Program specific data was gathered from principals - most of whom have a strong interest in making their school "look good" to outsiders. 3) Staff and parent respondents for the written survey in most instances were handpicked by principals. 4) The survey data, e.g. perspectives on most effective programs reflect what respondents (in most cases the school principal) chose to mention in the space that we provided, not necessarily all of the programs, strategies, barriers that would have been identified.

Telephone Interviews

Data gathered from principals on the use of Chapter 1 funds may have been influenced in similar ways: 1) At a time when most school budgets are being cut, principals may have been wary of directing any criticism towards central office administration. 2) The sample includes only principals who reported using Chapter 1 funds to support parent and community involvement activities on their survey.

Site Visits

Field interviewers attempted to get a comprehensive picture of the school during on-site visits. However, in each instance, the principal of school was the focus of the visit. In two upcoming studies, we will look more closely at the impact of other key actors, (teachers, parents, and students) on program and policy.

Table 1: Breakdown of Schools Responding to Survey

States Represented	# schools w/in state	Chapter 1 Schoolwide Program	Parent Choice Plans
CA	10	8	8
DC	1	1	1
FL	2	1	1
IN	1	1	
MA	13	6	10
MO	1	1	
NJ	1		
NY	4	2	3
OH	4	1	4
RI	1		
TN	1		
TX	1	1	1
VA	1	1	1
WI	1	1	1
TOTAL	42	24	30

Grade Breakdown of School Respondents

Pre K	1	Elem. & Middle	1
Pre K & Elem.	12	Middle grades	8
Elem. grades	18	High school grades	2

KEY: Table 1 represents the 42 schools which responded to the survey (sent to 52 schools)

Grade Levels: (the schools' levels fall within a category below)
PreK: Infants & Toddlers
PreK & Elem.: PreKindergarten & Elementary
Elem: Elementary (K - 5)
Middle Grades: sixth through eighth grades
High school grades: seventh through twelfth grades

CURRENT PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES ACROSS REACHING OUT SCHOOLS

SUMMARY OF POINTS

1. **The level of reaching out activity reported by schools is high.**

   * Every school reports offering at least three activities across six major types of family, school and community connections: i) School Help for Families, ii) Family Help for Schools, iii) School-Home Communication, iv) Involvement in Learning Activities, v) Decision-making, Advocacy and Governance, and vi) Collaboration and Exchanges with the Community.

2. **Many reaching out schools are redefining themselves as community institutions by serving families and other community residents and by exchanging resources with other community institutions.**

   * One out of two schools has a parent center.
   * Forty-three percent employ home visitors.
   * Eighty-six percent provide translation services to non-English speaking families.
   * Forty-three percent provide direct services to the community including adult education workshops, clothing exchanges, and vaccination clinics.

3. **Traditional strategies remain predominant. At least eighty percent of schools hold parent-teacher conferences, have parents help out on field trips and require them to check on homework.**

   Only:
   * Twenty-nine percent offer in-school daycare and/or childcare.
   * About half provide parents with prepared materials to use with their children at home.
   * Fifty-five percent involve parents in evaluation of school programs.
   * Seventeen percent have a hotline which parents can call for advice and information on children's homework.

4. **Many reaching out schools are exploring a wide range of strategies to involve more parents and other community residents in school activities.**

   * Every school reports using at least seven different forms of communication.

- About half of schools offer families a range of school volunteer opportunities.
- About two-thirds are collaborating with a broad spectrum of community agencies.

5. School improvement councils and parent associations are found in about 80% of the schools.

   - Many schools report difficulty in involving parents beyond a small corps of activists in planning and decision-making work.
   - Few principals report significant work being done by independent community activists oradvocacy groups.
   - Fifty-five percent involve parents in evaluation of school programs.

6. Although there is little firm data on the actual cost of family and community involvement activities, reaching out schools appear to rely most heavily on district funds to support family and community involvement programs. In contrast, Federal funds appear to be much less frequently utilized.

7. Many schools identify traditional kinds of reaching out strategies as their most effective programs.

   - Programs identified most commonly as effective are: decision-making mechanisms; school-home communication activities; and collaboration and exchanges with the community.

8. Most respondents cite family and community conditions or characteristics as the most important barriers (with lack of time -- by teachers or parents or both -- as most commonly cited barrier). However, little reference is made to the influence of school policies, structures, or attitudes.

9. Few of the schools appear to have programs that are sufficiently comprehensive to address the extensive and diverse needs of all the partners.

   - Only three out of forty-two schools surveyed reported having multiple strategies across the major types of parent and community involvement activity.

Note: Percentages Based on Responses From Forty-Two Schools

THE IMPACT OF POLICY ON HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY-LEVEL PERSPECTIVES

1. **Many schools report the existence of school and district level policies which affect their program.**

   * One out of two schools report having both a school and district parent involvement policy.
   * Seventy-four percent of schools report a parent choice policy which influences student assignment.

2. **Respondents at the school-level define the impact of policies in terms of their ability to to support or to obstruct their own objectives.**

   * Fifty-seven percent identified projects rather than policies as helpful.
   * Twenty-eight percent said a parent choice plan has a positive impact because it provides structure and support for parent involvement programs and/or helps parents to feel more in control.
   * Fifty-six percent of respondents identified policies which hinder programs in terms of lack of financial support, limitations imposed by teacher and custodial contracts or inflexibility of district-level regulations.

3. **The policy environment remains obscure to many at the school level.**

   * Thirty-three percent did not indicate whether parent involvement policy was in place at school,district, or state level.
   * Sixty-one percent did not describe impact of the parent choice plan on parent involvement.
   * Forty percent did not indicate which policies help and which hinder their reaching out activities.
   * Thirty-three percent of principals reported being unaware of 1988 Chapter 1 legislative changes concerning use of funds for parent involvement.

4. **Few principals report to be actively employing Chapter 1 funds to support parent involvement activities.**

   * Eighty-three percent report that they are using Chapter 1 funds primarily for staff salaries.
   * Thirty-nine percent perceive school tradition as dictating how funds will be used -- decisions

Chapter 2

CURRENT PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES IN REACHING OUT SCHOOLS

Introduction

The framework for the written survey of League of Schools Reaching Out member schools was based upon an expanded typology of family and community parent involvement activities developed by Joyce Epstein. This typology groups activities under the following six areas: School Help for Families, School-Home Communication, Family Help for Schools and Teachers, Involvement in Learning Activities at Home, Involvement in Governance, Decision-Making and Advocacy and Collaboration and Exchanges with the Community.

The typology is useful tool for examining the comprehensiveness of schools' approaches to parent and community involvement activities. In a comprehensive approach (described in greater depth at the conclusion of this chapter) multiple and integrated strategies are used to address the varied and changing needs of children and their families.

Studies of parent and community involvement traditionally have focused on the impact of isolated types of activity (See for example: Rich, 1985; Baker & Stevenson, 1986; Epstein, 1986).

In recent years, increased attention has been given to examining the impact of a comprehensive approach to parent and community involvement. Powell (1989) has pointed to need for studies and the development of programs which account for new knowledge gained over past decade from research on family-school connections in the elementary grades including ways that the practices of six major types of involvement contribute to comprehensive programs for home-school-community partnership. Kagan (1989) has looked at the ways in which programs with different designs and strategies have a positive impact on parents' feelings of competence and on children's healthy growth and development. In addition, a number of national reports have called for replication and support of comprehensive home-school-community partnerships (See for example: National Center for Children in Poverty, 1990, Goodson, Swartz, & Millsap, 1991, Committee for Economic Development, 1991).

A goal of the present study is to contribute to this growing body of research by examining patterns of parent and community involvement activity and approach <u>across</u> forty-two schools with a stated commitment to home-school-community partnerships. In particular, we sought answers to the following questions:

1) Which specific kinds of parent involvement activities are most prevalent across schools?

2) In which general program areas (e.g., "School Help for Families; "Collaboration and Exchanges with the Community") are schools exploring multiple strategies?

3) What funding sources are schools using to support their family and community involvement activities? What are school-level estimates of program costs?

4) What are school-level perceptions of program effectiveness?

In asking these and related questions, we hoped to get a better picture not only of patterns of activity across but within schools. What combination of activities and strategies do schools employ to create comprehensive programs which respond to the varied needs of children and families?

Table 2: Prevalence of specific kinds of family (parent) involvement activities: School help for families

Activity	% of schools reporting this activity (N = 42)
Health & social service referrals	86%
Parent education workshops	83%
Parent center in school	50%
GED or ESL classes	43%
Home visits	43%
Regular in-school day care	29%
Homework hotline	17%

TYPE 1. SCHOOL HELP FOR FAMILIES

Common Practices

Reflecting national and state interest in the non-academic needs of parents and children, reaching out schools are redefining themselves as community institutions which provide information, training and support to families and community members. The popularity of programs such as health and social service referrals, parent education workshops, and adult education courses suggests that these schools are trying to respond to the demands which often can complicate the lives of low-income children and their families (see Table 2).

For example, the Comstock Elementary Community School in Miami, Florida has designed a family-centered program. It provides parents with in-school child care and day care services; assists

them with specific needs such as obtaining legal or medical assistance and offers training regarding support for their children's development. Six full-time home visitors are supported by Chapter 1 funds.

Programs such as Comstock's can help schools engage parents whose family and work demands might otherwise limit their involvement. In Part II of the survey, 19% percent of respondents identified demands of family and work as a barrier to program effectiveness (see Table 18). Only 29% percent of schools report providing in-school day care and child care services. The factors motivating or enabling some schools to provide day care and child care services are not revealed by our current study.

As the roles of schools shift, so do the expectations of parents and families. Reaching out schools' investment in programs such as social service referrals and parent education workshops suggests that more parents are turning to these schools for needed services. The fact that one out of two schools reports having a Parent Center is an important development. In a study to begin in the fall of 1991, we will explore factors behind this new development and study the role of Parent Centers more closely.

Table 3: Levels of school activity: School help for families

Frequency (N = 10)	Number of schools (N = 42)
1-3 activities	27
4-6 activities	14
7-10 activities	1

Diversity of Approaches

Less than one-third of the forty-two Reaching Out Schools provide comprehensive help for families and children (see Table 3). By comprehensive, we mean that a school reports offering a highly diverse range of programs under a category such as "School Help for Families." For example, the Ferguson-Florissant School District in Missouri offers parents a range of programs including parent education workshops, school-based day care, a Saturday morning educational program and family psychological services. In addition, trained staff make bi-monthly visits to parents of pre-schoolers to provide information about child development.

The majority of schools within the sample are providing families with limited help which does not take into account a number of

basic needs. For example, an early learning program in a highly diverse, low-income Massachusetts community has a hotline which parents can call for information on school and community resources. However, the school is not yet able to provide parents with any school or home-based training regarding how to take advantage of these resources.

The limited range of strategies many schools use to provide direct services to families contrasts with the comprehensiveness of school activity involving collaboration and exchanges with the community (see Table 13). Sixty-seven percent of schools in the sample report collaborating with a wide array of community agencies, businesses, cultural organizations, and churches. The variety in program types suggests that schools with a strong commitment to community partnerships are in the early stages of exploring the varied ways they can help families and children.

Table 3 is based on respondents' reports of practices they say they "do." It does not reveal how many parents or which are reached or how often. A reported practice may be for one grade level or the whole school. (This information also cannot be extrapolated from the other tables in this chapter).

Table 4: Prevalence of specific kinds of family (parent) involvement activities: School-home communication

Activity	% of schools reporting this activity (N = 42)
Announcements/notices	100%
Open house	100%
Teacher-parent calls	100%
Teacher conferences	98%
Report cards	95%
Parent-teacher calls	93%
Parent information meetings	90%
Communication in other languages	86%
Letters	86%
Newsletter	83%
Home visits	79%
Activity calendar	62%
Parents pick up report cards	60%
Parent handbook	57%
Automated information calls	12%

TYPE II. SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION

Common Practices

The popularity of activities such as announcements, teacher-parent calls and open houses is not surprising (see Table 4). Schools traditionally have relied upon these mechanisms to communicate with parents. However, our survey data shows that many schools are revamping old practices to communicate more effectively (see Table 19). At P.S. 146 in Manhattan, teachers now give out their home telephone numbers and regularly call parents in the evening. Teachers at the Back-to School Program in Boston, Massachusetts prepare positive weekly reports which are sent to parents regarding their children's progress.

A number of the schools are exploring new ways to communicate with a wider range of parents and families. For example, the Alexander Hamilton School in Cleveland, Ohio now publicizes its monthly school meetings in community newspapers and on local radio stations. Some schools located in highly diverse communities have developed strategies to communicate more effectively with bilingual parents. The Grove Avenue School in East Providence, Rhode Island has hired an outreach worker who is fluent in Cape Verdean Creole, Portuguese, and English and able to respond effectively to parents' questions and concerns.

Table 5: Levels of school activity: School-home communication

Frequency (N = 14)	Number of schools (N = 42)
1-3 activities	0
4-6 activities	0
7-10 activities	7
11-14 activities	35

Diversity of Approaches

Every school within our sample is employing a combination of at least seven basic mechanisms to reach parents, i.e. announcements and notices, open houses, regular teacher parent-calls, teacher conferences (see Table 5 above). Close to one out of two schools within our sample is utilizing a broader range of strategies to communicate with families. For example, Memorial Academy in San Diego, California combines less personal traditional forms of communication, (e.g., general announcements, and newsletters) with more individualized forms of communication such as frequent

parent-teacher meetings, student progress letters, and hore visits.

Within the sample of California schools, one out of two programs matches the comprehensiveness of San Diego's Memorial Academy's school-home communication strategy. In contrast, within the Massachusetts sample, only one of out four schools reports using varied ways to communicate with families. This variation raises questions for further study (e.g., "What motivates schools to find comprehensive ways to communicate with families?" "What kinds of policies, can support schools in developing school-home communication strategies which increase parents' investment in their children's learning?" "What communication strategies work best under what kinds of conditions?")

Table 6: Prevalence of specific kinds of family (parent) involvement activity: Family help for schools and teachers

Activity	% of schools reporting this activity (N = 42)
Helping on field trips	93%
Volunteering in class/school	93%
Participating in school events	90%
Fundraising	86%
Serving as parent representatives	74%
Tutoring	60%
Office work	55%
Parents telephoning	5%

TYPE III. FAMILY HELP FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

Common Practices

The popularity of parent volunteer programs within schools is well established (see Table 6). Many schools have a long tradition of welcoming parents' help on field trips, at school-sponsored events, and at fundraisers. Acknowledging that parents' busy schedules can limit their involvement, a number of schools have expanded parent volunteer programs by creating opportunities which accommodate the schedules of those who are employed. For example, the Torrey Pines School in La Jolla, California has scheduled tutoring sessions from 11:00 to 1:00 p.m. so that working parents can participate during their lunch hour.

In identifying effective programs, school staff and parents emphasize the contributions made by professionals and volunteers from the community (see Table 17). The Barron Elementary School in Plano, Texas reports that its partnership with a local corporation brings approximately 200 mentors to the school to assist in in-school programs. A number of other schools have found ways to engage the strengths of communities and families. For example, the Parenting Teen Program in Memphis, Tennessee has started a Link Lifetimes program. Foster grandparents, recruited by the school, follow-up on the home visits made by community mental health workers.

Table 7: Levels of school activity: Family help for schools

Frequency (N = 10)	Number of schools (N = 42)
1-3 activities	13
4-6 activities	16
7-10 activities	22

Diversity of Approaches

One out of two schools within our sample reports offering families a broad menu of ways to contribute (see Table 7). In addition to helping out on field trips, participating in school events, and volunteering in classrooms, parents are serving as after-school program coordinators, parent outreach consultants, newsletter editors, and school council presidents. Some schools combine "Family Help for School" type activities with other types of activities. For example, Community School 92 in the Bronx has found ways to widen parent involvement in school decision-making. Parents are designing curriculum and writing grants for a new school project called the "Parent Training Institute." The Institute will offer parents a range of training including leadership-building skills and home-based learning activities.

Table 8: Prevalence of specific kinds of family (parent) involvement activity: Involvement learning activities at home

Activity	% of schools reporting this activity (N = 42)
Parents check/sign homework	83%
Workshops on reading/math	67%
Teacher-prepared materials for parents	57%
Lending library for books/toys	50%
Pre-prepared materials for parents	48%
Home visitors	40%
Read aloud programs	40%
Parent-initiated activities	2%

TYPE IV. INVOLVEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Common Practices

Despite strong national interest in engaging parents as partners, a high percentage of schools within our sample have parents acting as monitors rather than as active participants in their children's learning (see Table 8). About half of all schools report providing work-at home materials for parents. Only two schools report having parents initiate their own home learning activities.

The Chelsea Early Learning Center has developed the CHIPS program (Chelsea Home Instruction Program) based on the HIPPY program (Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters) which originated in Israel and has been adapted in Arkansas and in other places. The CHIPS program is designed to help parents explore new ideas for supporting their children's learning at home.

Sixty-seven percent of reaching out schools now offer workshops for families on reading and math. P.S. 146 in Manhattan hosts a Family Math Night once a month. Principal Mamie Johnson reports that the first meeting drew as many as 50 parents and children. Each family was given a calculator to take home and keep.

In addition, half of the schools report having lending libraries for books and toys. Lending libraries allow families and children to borrow books, toys, and other materials which they might not have the resources to buy on their own. At the David A. Ellis School in Boston, parents have made each child a bright book bag to transport books from home to school.

Table 9: Levels of school activity: Involvement in learning activities

Frequency (N = 10)	Number of schools (N = 42)
1-3 activities	18
4-6 activities	14
7-10 activities	10

Diversity of Approaches

One out of four schools use a comprehensive strategy to involve families in learning activities at home (see Table 9). The Torrey Pines School in La Jolla, California has instituted a "Parents Involved Program" which gets parents into the classroom working with teachers to conduct hands-on science projects. Parents unable to come into school during the day are given the materials to build science centers within their own homes.

Other schools have hired staff who can help train parents in their own homes. The Comstock School in Miami, Florida has used Chapter 1 funds to hire six full-time parent outreach workers who teach parents how to use the home learning materials.

TYPE V. INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE, DECISION-MAKING, AND ADVOCACY

Table 10: Prevalence of specific kinds of family (parent) involvement activity: Governance, decision-making, advocacy

Activity	% of schools reporting this activity (N = 42)	
Decision-making	Governance &	Advocacy
School improvement council	81%	76%
Parent teacher organization	79%	74%
Advisory committees	76%	69%
Evaluation activities	55%	48%
Bilingual PAC**	50%	40%
Special education. PAC	36%	36%
Educational advocacy groups	29%	33%

**Parent advisory council

TYPE V. INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE, DECISION-MAKING AND ADVOCACY

Common Practices

The prevalence of school improvement councils revealed in Table 10 points to the national and state interest in participatory school-level reform. School improvement councils encompass (i) school-based management/shared decision-making councils, (ii) school-level councils formed as part of district or state-wide school improvement plans and (iii) the councils required of schools with Chapter 1 school-wide program status.

School improvement councils potentially have more authority to make school-level change than the older but still popular advisory committees and parent-teacher organizations. A number of schools are devising strategies to help school councils operate effectively. For example, P.S. 194 in Brooklyn has hired an outside consultant to help mend the adversarial relationships between teachers and parents impeding joint problem-solving.

Decision-making mechanisms, such as school improvement councils, traditionally have involved small numbers of parents. A number of schools within our sample report experiencing difficulty in getting more than the most active parents to attend meetings. A parent outreach worker from LaFollette Elementary School in Milwaukee comments that "the number of parents who come for meetings to exchange ideas and concerns is small." She goes on to explain that her effort to call parents individually and send them personal invitations has not increased attendance at meetings.

Looking for new strategies to engage more working parents in decision-making, Cleveland's Adlai Stevenson Elementary School schedules school council meeting with activities guaranteed to draw parents. Student performances are especially effective in this regard. Other schools such as the Graham and Parks School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, want their decision-making bodies to reflect and draw upon the diversity of their community. As a first step, Graham and Parks has formed a Haitian Parent Council. The Haitian Parent Council holds its family-style meetings on Sunday nights and addresses issues specific to Haitian parents.

We asked principals to identify internal and external organizations which serve as advocates for children's and families' needs. Popular school decision-making mechanism such as school improvement councils, advisory committees and parent-teacher organizations were identified most frequently as performing advocacy roles. Significantly, external educational advocacy groups, were identified very infrequently as serving as advocates. These data suggest that external advocacy groups are not seen as significant actors within school-level reform efforts.

Our survey did not include individuals in its list of possible advocates. However, a number of schools mentioned the contributions made by parents, teachers, and ministers who advocate for children's needs as they perform other functions within the community. For example, Brenda Richards, the principal of Shaed Elementary School in Washington, D.C. brings her commitment to children's needs with her to the numerous community events which she attends. Likewise, Len Solo, the principal of the Graham and Parks School in Cambridge, attends local community meetings to encourage parents to support the school.

Table 11: Levels of school activity: Involvement in governance and decision-making, advocacy

Frequency (N = 14)	Number of schools (N = 42)
1-3 activities	3
4-6 activities	12
7-10 activities	16
11-14 activities	11

Diversity of Approaches

As reported in Table 11, every school within our sample report having multiple decision-making mechanisms. Some schools within our sample have identified the presence of multiple decision-making mechanisms as valuable. Others have underscored the hazards of duplication. A principal from the Woodcrest Elementary School in Los Angeles, California reports that her school has four major school advisory councils. Taken together, the councils are described as "providing a vehicle for continuous parent-teacher communication." Alternately, the principal of the Adlai Stevenson Elementary School in Cleveland points to the duplication of services by various school councils as limiting parent participation in the school site council "whose goals and concepts are extremely valuable to the operation of the school." He explains that parents who may want to join the school site council are discouraged from doing so by the councils' inability to fundraise. As a first step in addressing this problem, the school now schedules regular joint parent-teacher and school site council meetings to facilitate "more effective problem-solving."

Table 12: Prevalence of specific kinds of family (parent) involvement activity: Collaboration and exchanges with the community

Activity	% of schools reporting this Activity (N = 42)
College/university collaboration	86%
Human service agency collaboration	79%
Programs with police, courts and city agencies	79%
Business partnerships	69%
Cultural agency collaboration	64%

TYPE VI. COLLABORATION AND EXCHANGES WITH THE COMMUNITY

Common Practices

The prevalence of varied school community partnerships is reflective on a small scale of the national attention being given to the concepts of school partnership and inter-agency coordination. In that our sample includes only schools already committed to collaboration as a strategy, it is not representative of urban public schools.

Eighty-six percent of schools report being involved in some form of collaboration with a local university or college (see Table 12). At Middle College in Cleveland, extensive collaboration with nearby Cuyahoga Community College has both faculty and students serving as "big buddies" for students. Other prevalent forms of partnership include collaboration with human service agencies (79%) and with city agencies (e.g., police and parks departments). Pointing to the specific benefits which human service collaboration can bring, a parent from C.S. 92 in the Bronx comments, "We need someone like this (social worker) in our school. Parents do not know where to go for help." At the Torrey Pines School in La Jolla, California, collaboration with city agencies joined teachers parents and students in the building of a nature trail.

Table 13: Levels of school activity: Collaboration and exchanges with the community

Frequency (N = 6)	Number of schools (N = 42)
1-2 activities	7
3-4 activities	20
5-6 activities	15

Diversity of Approaches

The comprehensiveness of school activity involving collaboration and exchanges with the community stands out (see Table 13). Sixty-seven percent of schools in our sample report that they are collaborating with a broad spectrum of community agencies including universities, churches, businesses, and fire departments.

To allow for a multi-directional exchange of services between school and community, some schools within our sample are building partnerships which are mutually beneficial. For example, at the Shaed Elementary School in Washington, D.C., class presidents from a local college lead after-school programs in self-esteem. On Saturdays, the school principal travels to the college to teach a Saturday workshop for adult learners. Collaboration between the Ford Motor Stamping Plant and the Miles Park School in Cleveland has resulted in "temporarily released" assembly workers serving as tutors in classrooms, a career day for sixth grade children held at the plant, and an exhibition of students' art at the company.

Table 14: Estimated cost(s) of family (parent) involvement activities (per school year)

Minimum	Maximum
$0	$1,000,000

33% of schools did not complete cost question
(N = 42)

Cost of Family (Parent) Involvement Activities

The actual cost of parent and community involvement activities cannot be determined from the collected data. Thirty-three percent of the principals surveyed left the question unanswered. The remaining sixty-seven percent gave estimates ranging from zero to $1,000,000.

A school which estimated its annual program cost to be $300 reports offering a range many of parent and community involvement activities including a summer recreation program, an after-school crafts program for families, and a lending library for books and toys. A school which reported that its program cost approximately $28,000 employs both a full-time parent coordinator and a Haitian parent liaison. It also has a collaborative agreement with a local university's community service program. An alternative parenting education program for teen mothers estimated its cost at $100,000. The program, housed within a school, offers educational, counseling and health services to teen mothers.

The fact that many principals did not respond and that estimates varied widely suggests both the difficulty of determining program costs which draw upon a range of funding sources or the lack of attention to these cost factors at the school level.

Respondents' difficulty in determining cost may also reflect the centralized nature of the district budget process in many places. One principal stated that he was unable to answer the cost question because "information was not available." Likewise, a principal of a elementary school in Chelsea, Massachusetts, estimated zero program cost due to the fact that, "Family outreach programs are city-wide grants operated through central office."

In telephone interviews, a smaller but overlapping sample of school principals made similar reference to their lack of access to cost data regarding the use of Chapter 1 funds. Sixty-seven of principals perceived themselves as having little of no input over the amount of funds which they receive. They saw this as due to the fact that information was centrally controlled.

As the number and variety of family-school collaborations increases in schools committed to reaching out strategies, questions of cost and effectiveness must be addressed. Those making decisions at the local school level must be informed about costs as well as about the evidence about results as they make decisions about which strategies should be supported. Given limited resources, cost effectiveness information about family-community intervention is as important as evidence of cost-effectiveness in making other kinds of strategic decisions in a school. For further discussion of costs of parent and community involvement activities, see Epstein (1991) and Nadine and Morris (1991).

Table 15: Frequency of funding sources used for family (parent) involvement activities

School usage across levels (Federal, state, school/district, and private)

	% of schools* (N = 42)	% of schools** (N = 42)
SCHOOL/DISTRICT	21%	
Fundraisers		60%
School budget		50%
District budget		40%
School-based management		33%
District parent organizations		31%
PRIVATE	12%	
Business		36%
Foundation		24%
STATE	7%	
Low-income & minority funds		26%
Pre-school		26%
Desegregation funds		21%
Bilingual education		19%
Special education		19%
FEDERAL	0%	
Chapter 1		62%
Bilingual education		19%
Chapter 2		10%
Aid for Handicapped Children Act		7%
Family Support Act		2%

* Percentage of schools that reported using at least three different sources of funds at each of the following levels: (i) school/district, (ii) state or (iii) federal level.

** Percentage of schools that reported using program as source of funds.

Funding Sources Used For Parent and Community Involvement Activities

School district funds appear to be one of the more often utilized funding sources for parent and community involvement programs. Twenty-one percent of schools within our sample report using at least three or more of the following: school budget, district

budget, school-based management projects, district parent organizations to support their program. Sixty percent of schools report paying for some program cost through their own fundraising activities.

Quite surprisingly, federal funds appear to be the most under-utilized of funding sources for parent and community involvement programs, though nearly all of the schools report receiving fund from two or more federal sources (see Table 15). The majority of schools report that they rely upon Chapter 1 funds as their sole source of Federal support for these kinds of activities.

Reaching Out Schools' greater reliance upon district funds is significant given that Federal funding for parent and community involvement activities is on the rise. With a high percentage of low-income students, most schools within our sample are eligible for a range of Federal funding programs. Additional data from our survey suggests that while most principals are concerned about the lack of continued funding for their program, many perceive decisions surrounding use of Federal funds as outside of their domain (see Table 25). In a future study, we will examine school and district level funding practices more closely to determine their impact on program.

Table 16: Implemented school reform initiatives

Type of Reform	Percentage of schools implementing specific reform(s) (N = 42)
School initiated	76%
District	55%
State	33%
Federal	12%

School Reform Initiatives

The past decade has spawned scores of educational reform initiatives at the local, state and federal levels. To help us get a picture of which kinds of reforms may support schools in partnership-building, respondents were asked identify reform efforts in place at their school.

The majority of reaching out schools are involved in reforms initiated at the school level (see Table 16). The school-initiated reforms identified varied widely from two-way bilingual classes and the school's dress code to teen mentoring programs and the Chapter 1 School Improvement Planning process. In that many of the reforms identified as school-initiated were programs known to

be supported through state and federal funding, the data are somewhat misleading. The term school-initiated reforms may have been interpreted to include programs for which school obtained external funding for a locally-initiated idea.

In addition, our data shed little light on how reforms are integrated (if at all) with parent involvement programs or how they might influence program structure. The infrequent mention of Federal reform initiatives suggests that the integration of multiple reform initiatives deserves increased attention.

Below, we present an encapsulated summary of the results of the opinion section of the written survey.

Summary of Reports

School and Community - Level Perceptions of (i) Effective Parent and Community Involvement Programs, (ii) Barriers to Program Effectiveness and (iii) Effective Strategies

We are interested in respondents' perceptions of their various parent and community involvement activities. Which programs do schools consider effective and why? What are the barriers which they face in implementing the programs and why do they identify them as such? What strategies have been developed to overcome these barriers? The reports which we summarize below highlight the common themes which surfaced in responses to each of these questions. As we noted in our discussion of survey limitations, the perspectives are representative. They reflect only what principals, staff and parents chose to mention in the space we provided.

Table 17

Programs Commonly Identified as Effective in Building Home-School-Community Partnerships Within Schools

	Types of Programs		
RESPONSES	**DECISION-MAKING MECHANISMS**	**COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY**	**SPECIAL EVENTS**
Number of Respondents (n=92)	20	16	15
Specific Types of Strategies Identified	Organizations/Councils: Parent-Teacher Organizations Associations School Advisory Councils School-Site Councils Bilingual Parent Action Committee	City & Community Agencies Partnerships with: Local Businesses Hospitals College/Universities Police Special Groups In-school Human Service Professionals	Student Performances School Dinners Student Recognition Night Art Shows Community Receptions Career Days
Comments	• "Parent Teacher Organization work best because they enable parent & teacher to communicate about children."-*Parent* • "Parent Advisory Council meetings -- because they're well attended."-*Staff* • "Parents appreciate meetings that describe school programs, address specific school-related issues and are presented in English as well as Spanish."-*Principal*	• "We need more services like this (social worker) in the school, because it is an easy place for us to get to."-*Parent* • "Field trips give parents a chance to interact with teachers and students in their world. It also builds a bond with the community and applies educational curriculum to our daily lives."-*Staff* • "We have combined meetings of our mentors and our parent support group. Together, we plan and implement joint projects to benefit students." -*Principal*	• "We had a dinner where we invited some of the parents from the hardest to reach families. About 3/4 of the families we invited came -- some families who have never come to school before." -*Parent* • "Parents show up in greater numbers to see their kids perform."-*Staff* • "Grade-level dinners have built trust between school, teachers and" parents." -*Principal*

92 = Total number of respondents
31 Parents
28 Staff
rincipals

Table 18
Commonly Identified Barriers to Home-School-Community Partnerships

	Types of Barriers		
RESPONSES	TIME	CULTURAL DIFFERENCES	PARENTS ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOLS
Number of* Respondents (n=81)	15	10	10
Specific Types of Barriers Identified	Demands on: *1. Parents' time:* caused by personal problems, work schedule, child care responsibilities *2. Teachers' time:* caused by schedule constraints	*1. Language:* Prevents communication with parents & their participation *2. Cultural mores:* Mores which a) downplay importance of education b) discourage parent involvement in school	Negative experiences with Educational system
Comments	• "In an age where most homes have two working parents -- it's extremely difficult getting the parents to come out to meetings." *-Parent* • "When a parent expresses a need, someone has to be there and also have have the time to to help solve the the problem."*-Staff* • "We have always been cognizant of of the need to reach out to parents, but the staff has not had the time to do an appropriate and effective job until now."*-Principal*	• "How we as parents can develop a tolerance for our differences and bring all the cultures together to enhance the education of all children."*-Parent* • "Language barriers isolate parents from their children's education."*-Staff* • "Due to the lack of English language skills, many parents don't benefit from the services offered to them."*-Principal*	• "Some of the parents feel they don't measure up to most of the teachers." *-Parent* • "Turning parents' negativism into a positive attitude has become one of our greatest challenges."*-Staff* • "Parents continue to be hesitant about their involvement, but once they feel they have something to offer, involvement increases." *-Principal*

* 81 = Total number of respondents
8 Parents
1 Staff

Table 19

Strategies Commonly Identified as Effective in Overcoming Barriers to Home-School-Community Partnerships

	Types of Strategies		
RESPONSES	**COMMUNICATION**	**EXPANSION OF WAYS TO INVOLVE FAMILIES**	**PROGRAM STAFFING**
Number of* Respondents (n=81)	24	21	12
Specific Types of Strategies Identified	Weekly Reports Report Card Pick-ups Newsletter (Parent) Information Packets Telephone Tree Personal Contact After-School Calls School Newspaper Parent Conference Adequate # of Phones Translators/Services Personal Invitations to school events Community Advertising	Volunteer Opportunities convenient for parents: outside of class but within school, at home, after-school classes. Classes for personal and educational interests Parent Clubs Parent Centers Teacher-Parent Problem-Solving (small & large groups)	Community Involvement Specialists and Outreach Facilitators Community Aide Staff: Home Visits Parent Coordinator Parent Advisor Training support to teachers in Parent Outreach
Comments	* "By telling other parents about the good things that are happening in our school, they become more interested. *-Parent* * "We put out a newspaper that is sponsored by the community. This brings the school and the community together."*-Staff* * "We make sure that we are in touch with parents weekly and always give them something positive to hear about no matter how minor it may seem."*-Principal*	* "Training parents to become volunteers in their own homes and at school helps them help all our children."*-Parent* * "We have scheduled classroom centers from 11 - 1 P.M. so that working parents can participate during lunch hour." *-Staff* * "We host parent workshops in which representatives from community agencies come and provide parents with information and answer their questions." *-Principal*	*"Our Bilingual facilitator is the key for putting Bilingual parents in touch with school needs."*-Parent* *"Our staff has implemented a policy where staff make home visits to discuss strengths and areas of concern."*-Staff* *"Providing support for teachers, i.e., resource teachers, consultants helps them become more confident in strategies that they use with parents." *-Principal*

* Total number of respondents
30 Parents

I. School and Community - Level Perceptions: Effective Parent and Community Involvement Programs

Respondents were asked to identify the program most effective in building home-school-community partnerships within their school. The most commonly identified programs were 1) Decision-making Mechanisms 2) Collaboration and Exchanges with the Community and 3) Special Events (see Table 17). All three are familiar mechanisms which one would expect in schools with a commitment to partnership building.

Effective Programs

Across all three categories, both new and more traditional kinds of activities are identified as effective. For example, effective decision-making mechanisms identified include parent-teacher organizations, parent-teacher associations, parent advisory councils (formed under Federal desegregation plans), school improvement councils, and school-based management councils. Likewise schools report the effectiveness of collaboration with older partners (colleges and businesses) and new (educational consultants, community health clinics and arts groups.) Finally, as can be seen in Table 17, the special activities which schools report to be working well are "tried and true events," e.g. career days and student performances and original variations on the theme, e.g. school-community receptions and multicultural dinners.

Evaluation of Effective Programs

A number of respondents identified effective programs as those which address the needs of parents as yet unreached by the school. Principals, parents, and teachers stressed the importance of providing parents attending school meetings with clear and accurate information in their native tongue. Likewise, special events, such as grade-level dinners are identified as valuable mechanisms for drawing in families "who have never come to school before." For parents, such as Carmen Ortiz at C.S. 92 in the Bronx, good programs are user-friendly. She explains, "We need more services like this (social worker) in the school because it is an easy place for us to get to."

Respondents' descriptions of program effectiveness reveal their interest in judging programs by criteria which places families' and children's needs first. For example, the principal of Middle College in Cleveland, Ohio values her school's partnership with a local college because it brings college students, teachers and parents together to plan programs which benefit students. Likewise, a parent from the Parenting Teen Program in Tennessee appreciates parent-teacher meetings for giving "parents and teachers the opportunity to communicate about children."

A number of respondents highlight the importance of relationship-building in collaboration. Effective business partnerships, mentoring programs, and activities held in conjunction with human service agencies are described as building bonds between school and community. A parent at the Alexander Hamilton School comments that the school's business partnership has demonstrated "that parents are concerned and accept responsibility for their children's education. Likewise, a parent at P.S. 111 in New York City, praises a special event called Brotherhood Night which teaches parents, teachers and students how to increase their appreciation for school diversity.

Unmentioned Programs

Reaching out schools' interest in engaging a broader range of parents makes their lack of reporting on home-based programs surprising. We do not know whether these programs are successful or not. School councils, college and business partnerships and special events traditionally have drawn parents who are already active in schools. In contrast, home visitor programs, identified by close to 50% of schools as part of their program, provide home-based training and support to parents less apt to visit their child's school.

Programs which can further strengthen school-community relationships through an on-going exchange of resources and skills also go unmentioned. For example, Parent Centers, which half of the schools report as having as part of their program, are absent from respondents' list of effective programs. In contrast to one day special events or monthly meetings, parent centers draw the school community together on a daily basis. Also missing from the list of programs designated as most effective are activities which train and support teachers in outreach (e.g., professional development activities and teacher action research projects).

II. School and Community - Level Perceptions: Barriers to Home-School-Community Partnerships

Constraints Facing Parents and Teachers

Asked to identify barriers to home-school-community partnerships, many schools within our sample point to the constraints facing parents and teachers (see Table 18). Nineteen percent of respondents state that the busy and incompatible schedules of parents and teachers limit their involvement and support for programs. Parents' work and family demands means few can volunteer during the day when the school needs them most, explains Robert Kinzelberg, principal of P.S. 111 in Manhattan. Other respondents identify the time constraints facing teachers as obstacles to program effectiveness. The principal of Washington's Shaed Elementary comments that support for her program requires a time commitment which few teachers can make during the school day.

Cultural Differences

Twelve percent of the respondents describe cultural differences as hindering their parent and community involvement program. In their comments, most of the respondents locate the problem in terms of parents' cultural identity rather than a school's ability to respond to diversity. An assistant principal of a large elementary school writes, "The greatest barrier is the lack awareness of on the part of our parents. Our school population is mostly Hispanics and due to the lack of English skills, they don't benefit from the services which are offered to them." Other respondents identify specific cultural mores as "stumbling blocks" which discourage parents' active participation and impede their child's success.

Negative Attitude Towards Schools

Another twelve percent identify barriers in what they describe as a negative attitude toward schools on the part of many parents. "Turning parents' negativism into a positive attitude has become one of our greatest challenges," writes one teacher. Parents' reluctance to visit schools is described by several as stemming from "failed educational experiences." A human service worker remarks "By the time parents enroll their children into our program, they are usually angry at the educational system and expect our program to fix whatever has gone wrong with them over the years."

Unmentioned Barriers

In describing barriers, respondents did not make reference to the barriers imposed by the larger contexts in which parents, teachers and principals operate (see Table 18). A number of respondents did emphasize that changes in the work force and the composition of

the family had reduced the amount of time families could commit to schools. However, not one pointed to restrictions which might by imposed by the larger policy context, (e.g., employer practices, adequate day care, access to health services). Even though no respondents mentioned such policy barriers, the limitations of this survey are such that the reader should not conclude that school structures and large policy contexts are not often barriers to home-school-community partnerships.

A significant number of schools report that they lack many of the programs which can ease participation for parents and teachers. Only one of four schools reports providing in-school day care or child care. One of five schools reports having a home visitor program to help families unlikely to visit the school due to lack of transportation, child care, or fear. A handful indicate that they offer translation services to non-English speaking parents. However, most attached the caveat "when possible" suggesting that translation services are the exception.

Likewise, it remains unclear the extent to which schools are helping families take advantage of services offered in the community. Eighty-six percent of schools report that they provide parents with referrals to local social service and human service agencies. Another ninety percent claim to be involved in a collaborative arrangement with a local human service agency. However, only a small number of schools report offering follow-up activities which might help parents utilize community resources effectively (e.g., community involvement specialists). Likewise, very few respondents indicate having human service workers on site.

In saying little about program constraints, school practices and policy, many respondents may have been wary of offending superiors and colleagues. However, principals', teachers' and parents' lack of attention to policy appears as a subtext in their responses throughout the study. Chapter 3 will look more closely at the ways school-level perceptions of policy influence practice and program.

III. School and Community - Level Perceptions
Strategies That Work

Table 19 reports responses to the question about strategies which respondents found to be most effective in overcoming barriers or addressing program constraints. Commonly identified strategies suggest that reaching out schools are exploring ways to surmount barriers to home-school-community collaboration. Moving beyond basic program requirements, reaching out schools report (i) strengthening communication practices, (ii) employing program staff to reach further into the community, and (iii) expanding their program to involve more parents and teachers.

School-Home Communication Practices

Twenty-seven percent of respondents identified school-home communication as their most effective strategy. For most, the intent is to provide parents with information which will help them to become more involved in their children's education. Descriptions of school-home communication strategies center on communicating more frequently, paying individualized attention to parent needs, and collaborating with the community.

For example, Torrey Pines School in La Jolla, California reports "moving ahead with family-community collaborations" through its monthly school newsletter, weekly information packets and a parent "telephone tree" in every homeroom. The Back-to-School Program in Boston emphasizes positive communication. Staff member Wendy Shand explains, "We are in touch with parents weekly and make sure to always give them something positive to hear about their child no matter how minor it may seem."

At the Grove Avenue School in East Providence, Rhode Island, responsive school-home communication means translation services for the school's Portuguese-American community. Hoping to get the word out to more parents, P.S. 146 in Manhattan has teamed up with local businesses to publish a joint community-school newspaper.

Helping Parents Get the Most Out of Programs

Twenty-four percent of respondents highlight strategies aimed at helping parents get the most out of school programs. These strategies emphasize family-responsive program scheduling and providing comprehensive information about school programs. Daring to break long-standing school traditions, schools such as the Pacific Beach Middle School in San Diego are scheduling open-houses and report card pick-ups on Saturdays. To give parents the daily opportunity to accompany their children into classrooms, Principal Mamie Johnson of P.S. 146 in Manhattan recently moved her kindergarten classes back to the first floor.

Program Staff as a Tool for Reaching Further Into the Community

Fourteen percent of respondents point to the hiring of program staff as a strategy which has helped them overcome barriers to partnership. These schools report employing program staff to serve as school-community resource specialists, to conduct home visits, staff parent centers, and train teachers in parent involvement strategies. The effectiveness of program staff is described in terms of their ability to bridge the distance between home and school through outreach into the community and through training and support for teachers within schools. The Head Counselor at Memorial Academy in San Diego points to the school's new policy whereby staff make home visits "to discuss students strengths as well as areas of concern" as an important lever for change within the school. Likewise, Principal Cecilia Estrada of San Diego's Matthew Sherman Elementary School describes the effectiveness of providing training and support for teachers (resource teachers and consultants) as "helping teachers become more confident in strategies, techniques and programs which they can then demonstrate to parents."

Unmentioned Strategies

It may be important that most of the strategies described focus on increasing the level parent involvement through increased outreach rather than on changes in school climate and structure. For example, the strategies which schools identified do not address issues relating to teacher schedules. Likewise, few schools report employing strategies explicitly designed to create a school climate which make all parents feel comfortable, e.g. cultural sensitivity training, parent centers, parent-teacher school improvement action teams. However, this conclusion has to be taken with caution because of our survey limitations.

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

Our examination of practices and strategies reveals that many reaching out schools are (i) exploring a range of strategies within one program area or (ii) exploring a narrow range of strategies across several areas. However, very few schools are employing comprehensive strategies which recognize the inter-relatednesss and importance of multiple strategies across areas.

A number of recent studies on family education and early childhood education programs have defined a comprehensive approach as a key ingredient of program effectiveness. The seventeen promising family education programs, profiled in the U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Budget, and Evaluation's recent report Working With Families are described as "using multiple strategies to work effectively with families" (Goodson, Swartz, and Milsap, 1991, p.vii). Elements of the effective programs include home-based training, communication strategies which respond to families' ethnic diversity, and personalized school-home contact. Likewise, the Committee for Economic Development has called for support and replication of early childhood education programs which "strengthen the entire family, are accessible to all children, and are flexible enough to respond to families changing needs" (Committee for Economic Development, 1991).

In our analysis of survey data, we define a comprehensive approach to parent and community involvement as multiple practices in each of the six types of parent and community involvement activities (see Chapter 1). The comprehensiveness we refer to reflects the breadth of strategies employed. Our data does not reveal the extent to which these strategies are interconnected, part of an integrated school reform strategy, or responsive to diverse needs of children and families.

To illustrate what we mean by a comprehensive strategy, we will draw upon examples from three schools, each of which report offering multiple activities across all six major types of parent and community involvement. These schools are: the Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School in Boston, the Thomas D. Gregg School in Indianapolis, Indiana and the Matthew Sherman Elementary School in San Diego. In many ways, the three schools are very different. In addition to being located in different geographic regions of the United States, the ethnic make-up of their student population varies. The Martin Luther King, Jr. School student population is fifty percent African-American. The Sherman's population is eighty-five percent Latino. While the Gregg School's student population is sixty-six percent Caucasian. All three schools serve primarily low-income students.

Although different in many ways, all three schools are joined by the comprehensiveness of their parent and community involvement programs. Common characteristics of these comprehensive programs are highlighted below.

Comprehensive Parent and Community Involvement Programs Common Characteristics

1. Each school provides families with comprehensive training and support which facilitates their involvement in the program.

Example

Thomas D. Gregg School: offers working parents extended support through a an after-school homework center and summer recreation program.

2. To help strengthen partnerships within schools, each school provides teachers with training and support to help reach out more effectively to parents.

Example

Sherman Elementary School: At each grade level, parents and teachers meet to plan curriculum at the beginning of the year. Teachers are compensated for time spent planning parent outreach and other activities.

3. Recognizing that effective programs depend upon "getting the good news out," each school has developed aggressive communication strategies which respond to their communities' diversity.

Example

Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School: Each homeroom has a parent representative in charge of keeping all parents informed on a regular basis. Communication strategies include a parent phone tree and regular home visits.

4. Each school offers home-based activities to help parents support children's learning at home.

Example

Martin Luther King, Jr. School and Thomas D. Gregg School were the only two schools in our sample which report to offer parent-initiated home learning activities.

5. Each school is exploring ways to involve a broader range of parents and community members in decision-making and governance.

Example

Sherman Elementary School: Three hundred and seventy-nine school parents have participated in a empowerment training program sponsored by the Parent Institute for Quality Education.

6. Each school bolsters the comprehensiveness of its program through ongoing collaboration with diverse aspects of the community. The schools' community partnerships both reach out -- building support for children's needs in the community -- and reach in -- drawing in the community to change the climate within schools.

Example

Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School: The school's parent office serves as site of parent-teacher conferences and also houses an adult clothing exchange open to all parents in the community.

These three schools above appear to be moving in the direction of building comprehensive programs which can respond to the varied needs of children and families. Their strategies also suggest that they are beginning to explore the interconnectedness of strategies. In Chapter 5, we highlight program comprehensiveness as a cross-cutting theme of our study. As part of our ongoing work, we will be looking at the significance of program comprehensiveness more closely.

In the preceding section, we have explored patterns of activity of across schools to demonstrate importance of integrated school strategy. Drawing upon additional material from the survey, we will now examine (i) the larger policy environment which schools (and their programs) are a part and (ii) school and community level perceptions of the impact of policy on program.

Chapter 3

THE IMPACT OF POLICY ON HOME-SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY LEVEL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

Our examination of current practices and strategies reveals that many League schools are engaged in high levels of reaching out activity. Patterns of activity across schools mirror developments at the broader policy level. An increasing number of policies at the district, state and federal level are geared towards supporting school-home-community collaboration. (In another complementary Center report, we map and discuss the significance of six of these developments. See Davies, Palanki, & Burch, 1992. See also Epstein, 1991).

At the same time, there is a growing body of research which suggests that home-school-community partnerships require the support of "partnership-oriented" policies (Zeldin, 1990). McClaughlin and Shields have argued that school-community partnerships must be matched by policies which promote shared investment among various stakeholders (1987). Likewise, Krasnow recommends that policies which promote shared decision-making can help build teachers and parents' investment in collaboration (1990).

The present study extends this research by examining the influence of policy on League school reaching out strategies "from the ground up." How do key actors at the school level (parents, teachers and principals) view the impact of policy with respect to their program? Has increased financial support for partnership building at the Federal and in some instances state level encouraged principals and other stakeholders to take better advantage of policies to support their programs?

To explore these questions, principals were asked on the written survey to identify various policies and explain their impact on reaching out strategies. Second, each survey respondent was asked to identify more general policies seen as i) helping or ii) hindering their parent involvement program.

In addition, telephone interviews were conducted with twenty-three principals who had indicated Chapter 1 as a source of funds for their parent and community involvement programs. The telephone interviews focused on school-level decision-making around the use of funds for parent and community involvement. The key themes from the survey and interviews are summarized below.

Table 20: Schools reporting written policy(ies) on parent involvement in school, school district, or state

Parent Involvement Policy	Number of Schools Reported Specific Policy (N = 29)
District	22
School	19
State	9

Key:
14 = Total number of states represented in survey sample
21 = Total number of districts represented in survey sample

Parent Involvement Policies

Principals were asked to identify parent involvement policies in place at their school and at the district and state level. Twenty-two respondents report the existence of a district-level parent involvement policy. Nineteen respondents claim to have a policy in place at their school.

Nine respondents identified their state as having a parent involvement policy. Five of the schools identifying a state level policy are located in California which now mandates parent involvement in schools receiving federal and state funds. The other six schools which indicated having a state parent involvement policy are located in New York and in Ohio. New York and Ohio are not known to have policies exclusively targeted towards parent involvement. Respondents did not indicate the name or type of state policy to which they referred.

The data reported in Table 20 are incomplete and appear to be an inaccurate reflection of the presence of parent involvement policies at various policy-making levels. Thirteen of the 42 respondents did not answer the question. In addition, few of those who did respond identified or described the policy with useful details. A number of the schools located in districts known not have a parent involvement policy reported the existence of one.

The policies which respondents identified by name -- e.g., Chapter 1 policy (for both school and state) and school-based management policy (school) -- are part of larger mandates which include provisions for parent involvement.

Table 21: Schools reporting parent choice policies said to influence student assignment

Category	Percent
1.Schools reporting to having a parent choice plan	74%
Types of Choice Plans Identified	
1A. Preference Choice Children/Work Affidavits One child already in school	16%
1B. Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment Program	18%
1C. Other Controlled Choice Plan School-initiated Placement Grade Specific Choice Plans Undefined	32%
1D. Magnet Program/Speciality School	34%

Key: 30 = Number of schools reporting parent choice policy.
9 = Total number of states represented
21 = Total number of districts represented

Table 22 : Principals' perceptions of the impact of parent choice policies on student assignment

Category	Percent (N = 38)
1. Said Choice Plan has Positive Impact on Parent Involvement because it: 1A. Creates Parent Contract 2A. Structures Involvement 3A. Makes parents feel in control 4A Builds support for program	28%
2. Said Choice Plan has negative impact on Parent Involvement due to: 2A. Lack of transportation for parents and children.	10%
3. Does not indicate the impact of plan	61%

Parent Choice Plans

Principals also were asked to identify parent choice plans (in their state or district) which influence student assignment and to comment on how these policies did or did not affect outreach activities at their school. As revealed in Table 22, seventy-three percent of respondents identified their school as operating under a parent choice policy (see Table 1 for breakdown by state). A full range of choice plans are identified: magnet plans initiated under Federal and state desegregation orders, preference choice plans for parents with child care or employment constraints, plans open only to students in certain grades, full-scale controlled choice plans such as in Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Impact of Parent Choice Plans on Program

Twenty-eight percent of principals perceived their choice plan as having a positive impact on parent involvement activities at their school. In general, a positive impact was defined in terms of the extent to which policy lent support to the school's own initiatives. For example, the assistant principal of the Comstock Elementary School in Miami, Florida, Bertha Pallin reports that her district's policy on student assignment creates a mechanism for keeping parents informed about a wide range of school events during the school year. At an elementary school in Boston, parent choice has drawn in parents who are excited about the school and want to make it better. As a result, reports principal Bill Henderson, "The school has become popular and parent participation has increased." At the Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School in Boston, the choice plan is seen as having a more subtle but still powerful effect. It is said by the principal to empower parents to "feel more in control."

Other respondents indicated that their parent choice policy is having a negative impact on program. Commented one principal, "Many of our parents do not have transportation to the schools and so are unable to participate in our everyday activities."

Table 23

Respondents' Perceptions of Policies which Help/Hinder Home-School -Community Partnerships

33% of Respondents Identified Helpful Policies (N = 86)					
43% identified helpful policies (N = 28)			57% identified helpful policies as programs (N = 28)		
Types of Policies	%	Specific Examples	Types of Programs	%	Specific Examples
Federal	35%	Desegregation Law Chapter 1 regulations	Federal	10%	Early Education
State	25%	Choice Plan State Funding	State	14%	state-side school restructuring effort
District	20%	Parent Involvement Policy School-based management	District	35%	magnet-sponsored conference shared-decision making council
School	25%	Principal Support Collaborative Agreements	School	60%	child-care school-council special events parent workshops

86 = Number of respondents who answered question

34 Principals
24 Staff
28 Parents

Table 24

School and Community-Level Perceptions of Policies which Hinder Home-School-Community Partnerships

56% of Respondents Identified Policies which Hinder (N = 86)			
LACK OF FUNDS (44%) N = 48	CONTRACTUAL LIMITATIONS(26%) N = 48	TRANSPORTATION POLICIES(10%) N = 48	OTHER (21%) N = 48
Projects must be self-supported. No specific funds budgted by district for program. No money to pay for after-hours events.	Custodial contract limits use of building. Can't provide teachers with in-service training due to union rules on scheduling.	Transportation policies place strain on families and children. Policy which forbids parents to ride bus with children.	Lack of clarity and complexity of policies. Policies not responsive to families needs.

86 = Number of respondents who answered question
34 Principals
24 Staff
28 Parents

Other Policies Identified as Influencing Program

A. Helpful Policies

Thirty-two percent of the respondents identified policies perceived as helping their parent and community involvement program. Forty-three percent of these respondents identified helpful formal and informal policies (see Table 23). Explanations of the positive impact emphasize the ways policies have extended or curtailed school initiatives. For example, a Federal mandate for desegregation is described by a parent program staff member as helping the school community to appreciate and work on their differences. A principal in Massachusetts cites the district's adoption of school-based management as the motivating mechanism behind her school's planned emphasis on parent involvement. An administrator of a school in Ohio points to her school's informal agreement with a local college which allows school to use "college facilities during day or night hours at no extra charge."

Respondents also weigh the positive impact of more general policies in terms of their enabling/obstructing effect on school-level programs (see Table 23). When asked to identify policies which help their parent involvement program, 57% of respondents identified not actual formal policies but programs or projects. For example, at the Federal level, Chapter 1 parent advisory councils are cited. Respondents in Missouri with a policy mandating support for parents as children's first teachers cite early education programs. Finally, a number of respondents identified programs rather than policies which were initiated at the school and district level (e.g., free lunch, after-school and mentoring programs).

B. Harmful Policies

Fifty six percent of respondents identified policies which hinder their home-school-community partnerships (see Table 24). Harmful impact is described either in terms of lack of financial support (44%), limitations imposed by teacher and custodial contracts (26%), or the inflexibility of district level regulations (e.g., transportation policies).

As with helpful policies, the emphasis is on ways in which policies prevent schools from reaching out to all of the parents in a school. For example, a principal of a New York City public school sees lack of specific funds budgeted for parent involvement as preventing the school from providing translation services for non-English speaking parents and transportation services for parents. Likewise, program staff at a San Diego school comment that strict contractual limitations have made it difficult for school to offer in-service training on parent involvement for teachers.

Restrictions imposed by district regulations, were also cited (10%). Parents from a number of districts report that laws providing transportation services only to families outside a two mile radius do not take into account the needs of working parents. Likewise a parent at an elementary school in California voices similar complaints about policies forbidding more than one family member to attend the same magnet school.

Respondents' emphasis on the ways that different policies constrain their program contrasts with the lack of attention to how policies help. While only a small percentage identified financial support offered by Federal programs such as Chapter 1 or state funding as helpful, forty-four percent could point to lack of funds as undermining their project.

Use of Chapter 1 Funds to Support School-Home Partnerships

Table 25
Principals' descriptions of their role in applying for and using Chapter 1 funds

Description of Response	Percent of principals (N = 23)
1. Principals have little or no input in terms of amount of funds they receive or what it will be used for.	100%
2. Principals can exercise some authority over hiring when funds are used for staffing (i.e., hiring parent instead of teacher for paraprofessional position).	43%
3. School-improvement plan is good mechanism for insuring school input into how funds are spent.	100%
4. Tradition dictates how funds will be used -- either principals or the central office designate how funds will be used based upon what they have always done.	39%
5. Principal conducts surveys of their staff and parents to assess needs and determine how best to use funds.	13%

Table 26

Principals' description of specific uses of Chapter 1 funds

Description of Response	Percent (of principals) N = 23
1. Funds used primarily for staff salaries.	83%
2. Portion of funds used for parent meetings and workshops (e.g., parenting classes, GED classes, adult literacy classes).	65%
3. Portion of funds used for related activities and materials including: materials, refreshments, translation services, child care, computers and transportation.	70%

Table 27

Principals' description of specific goals around parent and community involvement and use of Chapter 1 funds to meet these goals.

Description of Response	Percent (of principals) N = 23
1. Parent education is critical to involving parents in their children's education. Parent education programs should include home-based training and support.	35%
2. Increased parent outreach via a range of strategies, including home-vistors, teacher-parent telephone calls, community collaboration.	61%
3. Creating a parent-friendly school climate which encourages direct involvement in school activities (i.e., by opening a parent center).	35%

Table 28

Principals' Perceptions of Rules and Regulations that (A) Help or (B) Hinder Use of Chapter 1 Funds for Parent Involvement

Description of Response	Percent (of principals)
(A) HELP	
1B. School improvement planning process is a valuable mechanism for insuring parent involvement in how funds are spent.	30%
2B. School-wide project status allows more flexibility around use of funds.	10%
	N = 23
(B) HINDER	
1A. Amount of Chapter 1 funds received by schools is inadequate. Not enough funds available to expand parent involvement activities and maintain current level of service to students.	22%
2A. Chapter 1 funds can only be used for parent involvement in context of district support.	13%
3A. Principal's have little role in decision-making in Chapter 1 application and funding process.	14%
4A. Chapter 1 funds cannot be used easily for essentials such as "refreshments."	13%

Use of Chapter 1 Funds to Support School-Home Partnerships

To explore further school-level perceptions of how policy affects program, 23 telephone interviews were conducted with principals with regards to their use of Chapter 1 funds. As the largest Federal compensatory education program with a clear mandate for parent involvement, Chapter 1 can help illustrate school-level perception of policies intended to support partnership building. The principals were selected because they indicated Chapter 1 as a source of funds on their parent and community involvement survey.

Principals' Role in Chapter 1 Decicision-Making Process

All of the principals interviewed perceived themselves as having little or no input in terms of the amount of Chapter 1 funds which they receive or what it will be used for (see Table 25). They saw this as caused by the fact that information is centrally controlled. In several instances, a principal would insist that she/he was not the best source of information. One-third indicated that they were unaware of the legislative changes in Chapter 1 promoting the use of funds for parent and community involvement. Although the focus of the interview on school-level practices was made clear, interviewers were frequently directed to program staff at the central office where in the words of one principal "all that kind of information is kept."

Discretion Over Hiring

Close to half of the principals interviewed perceived themselves as having some discretion over Chapter 1 staffing decisions (see Table 25). In the context of other constraints, principals made innovative hiring decisions that which could support parent involvement. For example, the Miles Park Elementary School in Cleveland developed a school-wide Chapter 1 plan which included hiring educational aides to help out during breakfast. To help make the program more effective, principal Mildred Foster hired two school parents to fill the position. She reports that her decision has boosted parent involvement throughout the school, explaining that the continual presence of parents as staff has served as a magnet for parents visiting the building for the first time.

Benefits of School Improvement Process

Thirteen percent of principals confirm that the school improvement planning process can help boost reaching out activities (see Table 25) School-wide project status allows schools to use funds to benefit all of the students in the building. To qualify for school-wide funds, schools must have a high percentage (75%) of low-income students in the school. In addition, schools must develop a school improvement plan in collaboration with parents, teachers and other program staff. For example, through the school-improvement planning process, the Alonzo E. Horton Elementary School in San Diego, California identified a need to reach out more effectively to its single parents. Principal Barry Bernstein reports that this past year, Chapter 1 founds helped fund parenting classes during the school day at a local community college, offer in-school child care and provide a range of translation services.

In sum, the principals we interviewed are quick to say that they have little say over how their school's Chapter 1 funds will be used. However, their responses also reveal that many principals are using what authority they have to help educate and/or leverage

the use of Chapter 1 funds for parent and community involvement activities (see Table 26).

The Influence of Tradition

Thirty-three percent of the principals report that in the absence of built-in mechanisms, tradition at the school and district-level frequently dictates how funds will be used (see Table 26). They claim that the motto: "This is the way we did it last year" is used as a reason for using Chapter 1 funds in traditional ways (i.e., to hire remedial reading teachers). Another 13% confirm that district support is critical to the use of funds for parent involvement at the school level. For example, in Cleveland, the district superintendent wrote a open memorandum encouraging the use of Chapter 1 funds for parent involvement activities. Two respondents from the district commented that the push from a school department office has made it easier to use funds for their reaching out strategies.

Lack of Funds

Mirroring data from the written survey, 22% of the principals interviewed perceive a lack of funds as hindering the support Chapter 1 could offer their parent involvement program. While the majority of principals articulated clear goals around parent involvement (see Table 27) including parent education (35%), increased parent outreach (61%) and building parent centers (22%), few saw Chapter 1 funds as a mechanism for helping them achieve these goals. Commented one principal, "It seems kind of like a Catch-22, either you use funds to expand parent involvement activities, or you keep funds going directly to students."

Eighty-three percent of the principals report that Chapter 1 funds are being used primarily to fund a staff position (see Table 26). A smaller percentage of principals report that a portion of Chapter 1 funds are being used for costs related to parent involvement activities such as materials and refreshments.

Principals' perceptions of funding limits are significant given the fact that appropriation for the Chapter 1 program has been steadily on the rise. When asked where they thought money was going, a number of principals suggested that Chapter 1 money may be used to fill in the gaps faced by financially-strained school districts. To paraphrase one principal, "Its tempting to use funds to hire program staff when there are threats of laying off teachers."

Using Chapter 1 Funds to Build Comprehensive Parent Involvement Programs: Examples from Schools Reaching Out

In spite of obstacles such as those described above, a number of principals report using Chapter 1 funds to make positive changes in their school's parent involvement program. Some examples of how

reaching out schools are using Chapter 1 funds to begin to build comprehensive parent involvement programs are highlighted below.

School Help For Families: At the Horton Elementary School in San Diego, Chapter 1 is partly funding day-time parenting classes. Offered in partnership with a local community college, the program helps the school reach out to single parents by providing in-school day care.

School-Home Communication: To help facilitate two-way exchange of information, schools such as Shaed Elementary in Washington, D.C. have surveyed Chapter 1 parents on program needs.

Family Help for Schools and Teachers: At Miles Park Elementary in Cleveland, Ohio, Chapter 1 funds helped hire two parents to serve as educational aides. Although the aides spend time in a number of classrooms, they have daily responsibility in the breakfast room where many of the school's children spend their early mornings.

Involvement in Learning Activities: To help parents support their children's learning outside of school, the Comstock Elementary School in Miami, Florida is using Chapter 1 funds to support the PEARLS Program (Parents who Encourage Achievement in Reading, Learning and Self-Esteem.) Started by teachers with no money, the program involves a variety of workshops which train parents to teach children in their own homes.

Involvement in Decision-Making Advocacy and Governance: The Matthew Sherman Elementary School in San Diego reports that Chapter 1 funds are being used to strengthen and support the role of bilingual parents in school decision-making. Likewise, supported in part by Chapter 1 funds, the Latino Parent Group advocates around issues such as, the importance multicultural emphasis in the standardized tests required by the Chapter 1 program.

Collaboration and Exchanges with the Community:
At Memorial Academy in San Diego, consultants hired through Chapter 1 funds include a local mariachi band - which helped draw a large crowd to last year's Hispanic Policy Forum.

The data explored above suggests that formal policies are having a significant impact on school's ability to reach out to families and communities. In some instances, the impact is described as positive (e.g., providing additional support for needed materials). In others, policies are seen as having a negative impact (e.g., restricting schools in the use of the building). The survey data suggests that there are policy characteristics which principals find more and less helpful. What is clear is that the principal plays a key role in determining what the impact will be.

In the next section, we will explore some of these questions further by taking an in-depth look at the reaching out strategies of five schools.

CHAPTER 4

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE SCHOOLS:

MINI-CASE STUDIES IN SAN DIEGO, MIAMI, CLEVELAND, WASHINGTON, D.C. AND BOSTON

The data described in Chapters 2 and 3 reveal that while most League schools are involved in high levels of reaching out activity, few schools appear to have programs that are sufficiently comprehensive to address the extensive and diverse needs of all the partners. In addition, we found that many at the school-level perceive policy in negative terms and as having a harmful impact on their program.

To begin to identify some of the factors which may support schools in building comprehensive programs, Center researchers conducted one to four day site visits in eight cities. Site visits were made to eight League schools, six private schools, and four public schools not in the League, but in the same cities. The eight League schools had been identified by project staff as employing comprehensive strategies to build their parent and community involvement program. The private schools and public schools were selected on the basis of references from an administrator of a school system. The private schools were selected as having interesting activities relevant to the study underway. The public schools identified were those that seemed to be moving more slowly or reluctantly toward parent and community involvement.

Site visits to League schools were intended to complement survey data by providing a close-up view of reaching out strategies. Likewise, visits to both private and public "contrast" schools were intended to sharpen our overall portrait of schools reaching out. At the conclusion of this chapter, we summarize the points of contrast gathered from our supplementary field visits.

In the site visits, we interviewed school district officials, community organization staff, and talked with principals, parents, and teachers. Our purpose was to look more closely at the dynamics supporting or obstructing a school's efforts to build partnerships with families and communities -- the interaction of strategy with environment and policy. The following questions were of particular interest:

* What links are there between program structure and school and community need?

* What is the role of key actors (e.g., principals) as mediators of policy, and what is their influence on program?

* What school-level evidence is there about which programs work best under which conditions?

THE SHERMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
by Don Davies

Some inner-city urban public schools have the feel of Fort Dodge in the 1870's -- armed outposts in unfriendly territory. Not the Sherman School in the heart of San Diego's barrio. Here all the signs and symbols say enter, you are welcome, and they say it in several languages. This is because it is Principal Cecilia Estrada's dream that the school become a "total community school" with autonomy over program, personnel, and budget decisions, offering a full-range of services to its community throughout the week and year. The school has a good distance to travel before that dream is fully realized as there are many barriers of money and policy to be overcome, but it is moving in the right direction.

The Sherman Elementary School enrolls about 1,200 students from pre-school through grade 5 in a large complex of bungalows and temporary classrooms. It is one of San Diego's many magnet schools, but only open to a small number of children from outside the immediate area enrollment. About 230 students who live in the immediate area of the school are attending one of the other five schools allied with the Sherman under the Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment Program (VEEP). Meetings and activities for these families are organized by their host schools using Sherman facilities. It is also one of San Diego's multi-track year-round schools and has staggered schedule during the year to accommodate more children. Rapid growth characterizes the city and the school district; San Diego County is the fastest growing county in the state; the city has already passed a million population. The schools are expected to grow by almost 30% to more than 160,000 students by the year 2000. One in six children in the city was living below the poverty level in 1980; that figure today is estimated at 1 in 4.

One indicator of the poverty status at this school is the fact that more than 90% of the students participate in the free breakfast and lunch program and 80% are classified as "limited English proficient." (81.4% Latino)

The school's current but still developing outreach program began when Cecilia Estrada became the assistant principal a decade ago. The origins of the effort were in the community itself: a serious drug abuse problem afflicting both young people and adults.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Formal Policies

The Sherman School is a part of a state and a school district with a multitude of policy initiatives, mandates, funded projects, and incentives designed to promote voluntary school desegregation, parent choice, curriculum reform, school-based management, shared decision-making, partnerships with business and community forces, and parent involvement and family support. Interwoven with these are many Federal policies.

Some important examples of the web of formal Federal policies include:

1) The city schools operate under a Federal district court-ordered integration plan, which emphasizes a voluntary magnet school plan with racial/ethnic enrollment constraints. Sherman School is one of a score of city schools that are a part of the VEEP.

2) The school receives substantial Federal Chapter 1 funds used largely for classroom aides and teacher assistants, and is designated as a Chapter 1 schoolwide project. The San Diego Schools Chapter 1 office has not to date encouraged schools to use Chapter 1 funds for the kinds of parent involvement activities specified in the 1988 Stafford-Hawkins Amendments.

California's policy framework has multiples origins: an activist legislature, a strong state department of education, and frequent ballot initiatives on education-related matters. Some important examples of state policies which have a direct impact on the Sherman School's outreach efforts will be noted here:

1) California has had for more than fifteen years a statewide program of school improvement councils (voluntary but with financial incentives) as mechanisms for teacher-parent-principal participation in planning for school changes.

2) Proposition 90 (adopted by statewide citizen vote) requires every school to prepare and publish a detail "School Accountability Report Card," which gives detailed information about school goals, achievement test results, attendance, curriculum, special programs and services, teachers, and school-level budget. The school report card is prepared by a committee which includes parents.

3) The state provides funds for pre-school classes on the school site to help prepare children for kindergarten. Pre-school families are included in most of the school's parent outreach work.

4) The state has a formal written policy encouraging parent involvement and has an office with a parent involvement staff to sponsor conferences and provide on-site technical assistance.

5) The Waters Bill (AB 322) requires school districts receiving Chapter 1 funds and schools that receive funds from Federal school improvement and Federal impact aid programs to establish parent involvement programs. The programs must be consistent with the California State Board of Education Policy. The policy "supports the involvement of parents in their children's education in meaningful roles." Included are goals such as teacher and administrator training, strengthening school-home communication, and developing effective strategies to integrate the parent involvement program into the school improvement plan. The law also requires school districts not receiving Chapter 1 funds to adopt policies on parent involvement consistent with state policy goals.

The local policy framework is also extensive and significant, as indicated by the following examples:

1) The San Diego City Schools's "Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives for 1990-92," adopted by the Board of Education in June 1990, lists as one of four main goals "Restructuring for Excellence in Governance and Collaboration." Objectives under this goal are:

a. Implementing Shared Decision-Making "... developing and implementing procedures for increased involvement of site administrators, parents, and site staffs in decisions affecting the operations of their schools, including selection of staff, staff development activities, site budgets, curriculum development, student assessment and accountability for learning outcomes"

b. Improve Collaboration with Parents, Community, and Business. "We will insure that by June 1991 and the end of each school year thereafter each school and division office will increase involvement and support from parents, community members, agencies, and interagency collaborative and there will be a ten percent increase districtwide in the number of school-business partnerships aimed at improved student learning."

The District's specific achievement objective for this period is: ".... by June 1992 each school and each major ethnic group of students identified (African-American, Asian, Hispanic, White) to have CAP (California Achievement Program) subtest scores in reading, direct writing, and mathematics which are below the baseline state norms will have reduced the gap between their scores and the district average by half."

2) To encourage schools to move toward the parent involvement objectives the district allocated $100,000 in 1989-90 for a parent involvement incentive program which small grants for

schools proposing projects to increase parent and community collaboration. The grants were made on the basis of proposals from the schools. The Sherman School received an incentive grant of $10,000 in the first year of the program.

3) In the summer of 1989 the local Board of Education adopted a formal, written "Parent Involvement Policy and Implementation Procedure" which recognizes "the necessity and value of parent involvement to support student success and academic achievement." In the policy statement, the Board commits itself to establishing effective two-way communication with all parents, respecting the diversity and differing needs of families, developing strategies and mechanisms at the school level, providing support and coordination for school staff and parents, and using schools to connect students and families with community resources that provide educational enrichment and support.

The district's framework for parent involvement is composed of a vision statement and three supportive components. The vision statement reads: "Comprehensive parent involvement includes the participation of parents in all aspects of their children's education resulting in improved supportive relationships among students, parents, and teachers and in significant academic and social growth for students."

The three major components of a comprehensive parent involvement program are:

1) capacity building and preparation for school staff to work effectively with parents;

2) partnership development to plan and implement parent involvement programs; and

3) follow-up and support to establish and sustain on-going parent involvement. (Administrative Circular No. 16, August 10, 1989)

4) To implement this policy the district has established an office staffed with a small number of parent involvement specialists under the direction of the Administrator of Community Relations. This office administers the incentive grant program, staffs a parent involvement task force, organizes workshops, disseminates information and publications, and provides on-site technical assistance. The district has also provided some direct financial subsidies for two of the independent parent training organizations in the city. (See below.)

5) The district organized a "School Renewal Project" in the spring of 1990 for 12 schools with especially severe academic achievement gaps. The Sherman School is one of the 12. The participating schools are offered greater autonomy and flexibility along with some additional staff help but no increased budget allocation. The Sherman School has the required

renewal project planning committee, which includes parent members.

6) In a variety of ways the district appears to be pushing hard for school-based management and shared decision making as a part of "school restructuring." The superintendent, Thomas Payzant, is nationally recognized as a leader in the school reform movement and has served on many national panels. The Sherman School is designated as a "restructuring school." His speeches and television appearances on reform topics can certainly be taken as a part of the political environment and informal policy framework that affects the Sherman School.

Informal Policies

The principal has a well-articulated set of intentions and objectives for the school which constitute the core of the informal policies which affect school-family-community collaboration. These are consistent with but go well beyond the local, state, and Federal policies sketched above. Her intention is to have the school become a "total community school" (her words), to have it reflect the values of its community, to achieve increased decision-making autonomy, and to assist with the education and "empowerment" of the families served by the school.

Another important part of the San Diego context is the emergence, albeit on a small scale, of an independent parent movement. Two organizations are actively involved in training parents and in pressing the school system for changes in policies and practices. They are the Campaign for Parent Involvement in Education (CPIE) headed by Walter Kudumu and focusing primarily on African-American families and the Parent Institute for Quality Education headed by Vahac Mardirosian and focusing primarily on Latino families. Mardirosian has recently moved to San Diego from Los Angeles, where he had many years of successful experience as a community organizer and parent trainer. The new Organizacion de los Padres Latinos at the Sherman is a direct outgrowth of the work of Mardirosian's Institute. The Urban League and the Pan-Asian Commission are also actively involved in citywide school issues and in some activities working with parents.

STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS

The school has developed a multi-faceted strategy to respond to this welter of local, state, and Federal formal policies and informal intents. It has at least three activities in each of the six categories of family-community-school collaboration.

Sherman Elementary School Parent and Community Involvement Programs in Six Categories

I. School Help for Families

* parent education workshops on many topics including family math drug abuse, whole language instruction, ESL and Spanish Literacy courses parent/student computer class
* at each grade level, teachers and families meet at the beginning of the school year to discuss curriculum, the learning goals for children, and to plan how families and staff will work together during the year to support students
* "Literacy for the Whole Family" project
* a full-time "drop-out prevention/motivation outreach consultant" who makes home visits and health and human service referrals
* a full-time school psychologist ("Family Counselor") who works with children and families
* after-school day care program
* space set aside and plans being made for a Family Resource Center (to be implemented in 1991-92)
* initial plans for an expanded home visitor program (1991-92)

II. School-Home Communication

* a parent handbook provided at the beginning of each school year or when a new child enrolls
* regularly scheduled parent conferences and quarterly reports cards
* annual open house
* phone conferences for parents who cannot come to school for regular family conferences
* quarterly grade level meetings where teachers meet with parents to discuss objectives for the forthcoming quarter

III. Family Help for School and Teachers

* The independent Organization of Latino Parents raises funds for their own work and for the schools
* Parent volunteers in the classroom organized by a parent volunteer organization
* Parents assist with the "Multicultural Week and Olympics."
* Parents assist with field trip to government and corporate sites

IV. Involvement in Learning Activities at Home

* Lending library of books and materials for parents to take home
* Expanded home visitor program to include helping parents support children's learning at home

* Family Math project

V. Involvement in Governance, Decision-making and Advocacy

* The Sherman Decision-making Team, (five parent members out of twenty-two, plus other parent members appointed to assure ethnic diversity) -- designed to make decisions concerning budget, personnel, curriculum, communication, and parent/community involvement
* parent members on Change Team for pilot "Renewal Schools"
* Organization of Latino Parents (a new, independent parent association)
* Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee
* School Site Council

VI. Collaboration with the Community

* partnership with central district of San Diego Police Department on drug abuse prevention activities, tutoring, and recognition assemblies
* partnership with Downtown Rotary Club (read-aloud volunteers in the school; annual career day)
* full-time community services officer on staff
* linkage to citywide Parent Institute for Quality Education
* field trips, meetings with civic leaders, and curriculum units consistent with schools magnet theme: business and government
* civic leaders meet with Sherman community members regularly regarding neighborhood issues
* Channel 10 Community Cleanup Project

NOTEWORTHY PROGRAMS

Interviews with the administrators, parents, and other school staff suggest that of all of the wide array of activities in various categories listed above three appear to be considered among the most noteworthy in terms of the school's academic and social success objectives or most noteworthy. There is little evaluation evidence available on specific programs. These will be described briefly.

A Developing Parent Movement

One of the most noteworthy activities at the Sherman School is the development of a new parent movement in the form of Organization de Padres Latinos de la Escuela Sherman (OLP). This parent association has been formed under the volunteer tutelage of a community activist and graduate student from San Diego State University, Rene Nunez. Nunez worked with and was trained by Vahac Mardirosian, founder and director of the Parent Institute for Quality Education, which is supported primarily by the United Way and corporate funds with some support from time to time from

the school district. This program seeks to strengthen families and the capacity of poor people to help their own children. The Institute has trained several thousand parents, including 379 from the Sherman School, in their nine-hour training program. The program has two main points, according to Mardirosian: 1) to help parents understand the school system in the United States; and 2) to help parents help their children at home. Mardirosian and colleagues such as Nunez believe that poor people are very capable of learning and helping their own children effectively: "They care; they're adaptive and coping. They are an indispensable resource. School administrators and parents just don't believe it." Mardirosian says very forcefully that school reform will mean very little until educators believe in the capacity of poor children to learn and in the capacity of the families to help them. "The thing that will make a difference is the aggregate of informed parents in the schools."

This philosophy and the Institute's approach and materials provide the basis for Nunez' work with the Sherman Organization of Latino Parents, which can be seen as the beginning of a potentially powerful parent movement at the Sherman. Nunez hopes that the Sherman School's organization will be linked to similar organizations at other schools and become a citywide movement of active and trained parents. OLP has already moved beyond training to be an advocate for the interests and rights of Latino students and parents. They have joined with other groups to press the school district to use the Spanish language La Prueba tests as an alternative to English-language standardized achievement tests. La Prueba now is in use in the district for Latino students with limited English proficiency.

The initial organizing issue for OLP was getting a new roof for the school's open air lunch area and are identifying other school-wide and system-wide problems and concerns.

The organization is raising money for its own work and discussing with the principal its need for a consistent place to meet. A family center at the school, which is in the planning stages for 1991-92, is a possible site.

The principal is very supportive of OLP and Nunez' work with them. She appears to see the organization as contributing importantly to the school's objectives and very consistent with her belief in cultural diversity as a resource and the school as a total community school.

OLP and the parent movement of which it is a part are noteworthy because no similar independent organization was identified in this 1991 survey of League of Schools Reaching Out members.

Parent Education

Parent education is identified by the principal and by parents who were interviewed as being especially effective in the schools's outreach efforts. Workshops -- from one to six sessions -- are the primary mechanism employed. Some of the topics covered during the past two years include: dealing with drug abuse, family reading, cultural awareness, children's transition to junior high school, bilingual education, and Family Math.

A special parent education effort was begun after the school decided to focus on whole language instruction in the school. Grade level teachers wanted to offer a workshop series to explain what whole language instruction is, to answer parent questions and possible concerns about it and to show parents how they can support the whole language approach at home. Resource teachers helped prepare the other teachers in planning their presentations to parents. The resource teachers also report that they were instrumental in "persuading" their colleagues to communicate directly with parents.

Much of the $10,000 grant from the city schools under the parent involvement incentive program was devoted to parent education activities.

Home Visiting

A first step toward a home visiting program already exists in the school in the form of a full-time staff person designated as the "drop-out prevention/outreach consultant." She reports doing "dozens of home visits" each month. These occur daily about attendance problems. When a student is chronically late or absent, a visit is made. If a teacher reports to the consultant that she senses that something is wrong, she will request a visit. On a few occasions this year, the consultant and a teacher visited a home together.

The outreach consultant assists parents in a variety of way (within time limitations) including making and keeping doctors appointments and social service appointments. She plays a major role in referrals to the school's family counselor and to health and social service agencies.

She sees herself as an ally of the families and a key link between the schools, homes, and community agencies. She believes that she is viewed by most parents in a very different light than the old-fashioned "truant officer" was.

The consultant has an interest in training parents to be home visitors as the school expands its home visitor program and links it more closely to supporting students at home academically. Serving as a member of individualized "student study teams" which are formed to individualize plans for students with special needs or problems is another responsibility for the outreach consultant. In the 1991-92 school year, the Sherman School will

establish an expanded home visitor program with foundation funds obtained through the League of Schools Reaching Out. The school's plan is to train parents or community residents with some community outreach experience to be visitors. They will listen to parent concerns, make appropriate referrals and encourage family members to support the children's school learning with practical home learning activities. A key part of the plan is to find ways to link the work of the home visitors with classroom teachers and other school staff. The principal sees this new strategy as way to reach many of the parents who now have little contact with the school. Estrada believes that the children of these families are among those doing least well in school. Hence, this strategy is seen as directly tied to the school's policy of increasing achievement and school success across the board.

PROBLEMS AND BARRIERS

The school is growing, even though the facilities were planned for a student population of about half of its current 1200. The student turnover rate is high, a problem shared with many inner-city public schools, especially those in cities such as San Diego which are a part of major immigrant streams. The 1988 "turnover index" of 100.6 was reduced substantially in 1989, but has climbed again. The rate undoubtedly reflects the current bad economic conditions in the immediate community and in the city, as well as poor economic conditions across the border in Mexico.

Student academic achievement, as gauged by standardized test scores, continues to be a serious problem in reading, language arts, mathematics, and other subjects. However, in the school's annual report card some progress is noted. The four year school plan required by the city schools details the achievement problems and lays out ambitious and specific strategies and targets, including involving families to help in each of the subject fields.

The magnet school policy, under the Federal district court order, requires each participating school to establish a curriculum theme. This explains the school's new name: Business and Government Preparatory Magnet." The school site plan identifies as one school need the better articulation of this theme into the curriculum and daily life of the school. This is a need that could be addressed in part by classroom teacher collaboration with both families and the community.

The principal and others interviewed say that an important need as yet inadequately addressed is the involvement of all of the classroom teachers in the spirit of family and community outreach aimed at improving student success. Many teachers are involved only indirectly in some of the school's special outreach activities which are often directed and staffed by administrators or staff other than teachers. Traditional teacher attitudes about

the division of responsibility between the school and home persist in this school as in most other urban public schools, including League members that are out in front in their reaching out activities. Parent trainers such as Mardirosian and Nunez of OLP believe that many teachers in San Diego still do not recognize poor parents as being able to contribute positively to the educational development of their own children and continue to see the cultural diversity in a community such as this one as a "problem" rather than as a resource.

In addition, the pressures of daily work, the limits of time, and the rigidities of school scheduling negatively restrict the opportunities of all school staff for reflection, for collegial planning, and community outreach.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENT

This school is extensively and diversely responsive to the policy context provided by the Federal government, the State of California, and the San Diego City Schools in relation to school-family-community relations. It is also richly responsive to its political and cultural context as an important institution in a Latino community characterized by both severe problems and great potential. In addition, many important elements of the current nationwide context of reform have direct influence in the school and are reflected in its strategies and even in terminology. For example, in various documents the school refers to itself as a "restructuring school"; the term "family" is replacing the term "parents" in some plans, consistent with the recommendations of the League of Schools Reaching Out.

External policies and the broader national context clearly fuel this school's internal response. But this response goes well beyond minimum expectations and is shaped strongly by the personality and intentions of a strong, charismatic principal supported by other staff and administrators. Cecilia Estrada's personality, leadership style, and educational commitment appear to be a dominant influence in the school. Another increasingly strong contextual influence is the emergence of a potentially powerful, new independent parent movement, organized around the new Latino parents association, which is linked to a developing citywide parent movement.

That the school efforts go beyond the policy requirements under the urging the principal and the press of the growing parent movement can be explained in part by the observation that both the principal and the parent organization are guided by clear ideological concepts and values. Most important among these are: the concept of multicultural education as a positive means to increase school success for many children labeled "at-risk" and the concept of the school as a total community institution.

The difference of the response of the Sherman School to its policy framework and context can be seen dramatically when it is compared to another San Diego public elementary school which is not a member of the League of Schools Reaching Out which was visited to provide a comparison.

With a similar framework of Federal, state, and San Diego school policies about school-family-community collaboration, the comparison elementary school has few activities in any of the six categories described earlier in this chapter. The chairman of the school site council, in answer to the question, "How much parent involvement is there in this school?" replied, "almost nothing." One policy difference to note. The comparison school has Chapter 1 funds but it is not eligible to be designat . as a schoolwide program.

There are three factors which may offer partial explanations to the differences in the way that the two schools respond to a similar policy environment. First, the two principals. In the comparison school the principal has more administrative experience and more formal advanced schooling. He expresses a conventional and distinctly cautious view about parent roles in the schools. In contrast to the principal of the Sherman School, he attributes the school's lack of academic success to the characteristics of the children and families (also largely poor and from lower socio-economic levels). He ascribes the lack of parent involvement primarily to lack of parent interest and to the notion that the parents in his school's community lack time and energy because of the nature of the demands on them. The Sherman School principal sees the external policies largely as resources and opportunities to be shaped to aid her in reaching her objectives. In the other school the principal sees the external requirements and funding possibilities as red tape, paperwork and "reefs to be navigated." The Sherman principal sees the community context as a mix of problems and resources; the comparison school principal views the community context as a deficit.

Second, the ideological core or clear mission so evident at the Sherman School was not detected during one visit and interviews with the principal and a small number of parents in the comparison school.

A third difference is that while the comparison school has a school improvement council as prescribed by state and local policies, it has no parent association (neither a conventional parent-teacher association nor an independent group such as at the Sherman). Few if any parents from this school have been trained by the independent Parent Institute for Quality Education, and there is no evidence of any other external advocacy organizations paying attention to the school's policies and practices. The School Improvement Council in the comparison school is described as not very active and not an important force

in the school. The parent organization at the Sherman School is clearly a force to be reckoned with.

The three differences cited are largely related to informal policies rather than the formal policy context. The reader is warned not to make too much of these speculative comments about differences in this sample of two schools. However, it is interesting and perhaps useful to speculate about the relative influence of the informal context in contrast to the formal policy framework. The two schools also present an interesting contrast in another respect: at the Sherman School, the formal policy framework is largely in harmony with and supportive of the informal policies as represented by the intentions of the principal and the independent parent association. At the other school, the principal's intentions seem largely unrelated to the formal policy context in regard to school-family-community collaboration.

At the Sherman School the state and local levels of policy influence appear to be largely intertwined and mutually supportive, with one important exception. The national policy intent in the 1988 Stafford-Hawkins Amendments to Chapter 1 is to emphasize various forms of parent involvement and parent education as a part of Chapter 1 strategies at the school level. At the Sherman School as in most other San Diego schools, because of the position of the central office administrators responsible for Chapter 1, this intent has not been realized as yet. Chapter 1 funds at the Sherman are used almost entirely for staffing.

Health and Social Services

Increasing health and social services to the children of this school is built in a variety of ways into the school's plans and the presence of a full time school psychologist and a child study team mechanism are steps in the right direction. But, the health and social service needs of the families and children in this community far outrun the capacity of the school. One approach to explore is collaboration with other human service agencies in the city and community. One San Diego school, the O'Farrell, is currently involved in a national "integrated services" pilot.

Need for Increased Resources

Collaboration, coordination, and restructuring can certainly help a school such as the Sherman to increase its effectiveness. But, more resources are also clearly needed. The scope of the problems and their complexity are simply too great. The match between policies and strategies to implement appears to be quite good, but the scale of need is dramatically larger than the kinds of programmatic responses that are presently possible. This school is a dramatic small-scale case study of the gap discussed so dramatically in reports of the Committee for Economic Development and the Children's Defense Fund -- the gap between the needs of

poor children and their families and what the nation is providing. But, the Sherman School is also an example of a school that is reaching out in an energetic and planned way to address the problems it and its community faces, responding to its policy requirements and its local context in an imaginative way.

COMSTOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
by Don Davies

In 1989, a parent worker encouraged Mrs. Benitez to go to the parent workshops at the school organized by two teachers. Mrs. Benitez, who recently arrived from Mexico, had no previous connections with the school. By the spring of 1991, she was elected to be a member of the school planning committee, has joined the volunteer committee who helps with field trips, and won a trophy for the parent who has contributed the most to helping boys and girls.

Mrs. Benitez (not her real name) is just one of more than 800 family members who have been directly touched by the Comstock School's parent involvement efforts this year. She is cited by the principal as tangible evidence that his commitment to parent involvement has paid off.

This commitment to parent involvement is something that Merwyn Levin brought with him to the school when he arrived as principal eight years ago, and he maintains that this theme still pervades the school. Two assistant principals, two teachers, and the parent outreach workers confirm this assessment.

Levin cites no national model or leader as being the origin of his interest in parent involvement or the multiple programs in the school but his conversation makes it apparent that he is aware that his school's reaching out efforts are consistent with many national reports and recommendations. He also indicates that district intent, stimulation, and funding have made a substantial difference.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Formal Policies

All public schools in Florida receiving Chapter 1 funds are required by Senate Bill 711 to establish parent outreach programs including home visits. Each school receives $30.00 of Chapter 1 money per child per year to support the outreach program with first priority for salaries for community outreach workers.

Dade County Public Schools' policy asks each Chapter 1 school to develop its own plan for parent involvement which must conform to the Federal Stafford-Hawkins Amendments of 1988 and the state education department's Chapter 1 guidelines. A school's plan must include these elements: information about the school's program and instructional objectives and methods; support for parents to work with their own children in the home to help achieve the school's instructional objectives; training for teachers and staff about how to work effectively with parents; ongoing

consultation with parents; provision for participation by those with limited English language and/or literacy skills; and home visits on Saturdays and during evening hours. The yearly plan is reviewed by the district's regional office.

Under the provisions of the Stafford-Hawkins Amendments, the Comstock School is one of several district schools designated as having a school-wide Chapter 1 program, meaning that all of the school's children and their families can be included in Chapter 1-funded activities.

The Dade County Public Schools require each individual school (as permitted by a state law) to establish a School Advisory Committee and provide policy memoranda, handbooks, and workshops to encourage the implementation of the mandate. The Committee at the Comstock school has fifteen members: ten parents, four teachers, and one community agency representative.

The stated intent of the advisory committees is to be an organized means for parents and other community representatives to advise the principal and "to serve as a link between the school staff and the community on matters pertaining to the school and the educational program." In addition to the school level advisory committees there are "feeder system" (regional) advisory committees and a countywide district advisory committee. The Committee played a key role in initiating a new policy of school uniforms for students and staff and installing a program of incentives for improved attendance and academic achievement. The advisory committee has also a school volunteer program which brings about fifty people into the school to help students and staff in a variety of ways.

Dade County also has a widely-heralded School Based Management/Shared Decision-Making program underway in which about twenty schools have volunteered to participate. The effort is described as stressing "teacher empowerment through local committees." Efforts to give parents a major voice in the local school councils were successfully opposed by the leadership of the United Teachers of Dade County. Participating schools are allowed but not required to have parent members of the councils. The Comstock School elected not to participate in the SBM/SDM pilot year. It appears likely that more schools -- perhaps all of them -- will be encouraged or mandated to move toward school site decision-making. However, parent involvement in the SBM/SDC does not seem to be a major policy objective as it is a some other urban districts. Some parent leaders in the county are publicly critical of SBM/SDC implementation to date.

Although the Comstock School was not a part of the county-wide SBM/SDM program this year, the principal points out that parents have been included on planning committees and predicts that they will be even more involved in the future in planning and implementing new school programs to increase student achievement.

The Florida Department of Education has been stressing parent involvement in a variety of ways. One program is the Red Carpet School Awards where selected schools throughout the state are honored by the Commissioner of Education. Comstock School received this award in April 1991.

Informal policies

The stated aim or intent of the schools' administrators -- in conversation, letters, and memos is to promote parent involvement of various kinds and to seek multiple collaborative arrangements with community agencies. The principal describes the school as having an open door policy.

The written school goal (from the Chapter 1 Schoolwide Project Plan) stresses student achievement for all:

> We, at Comstock Elementary School, believe that all children learn. We will provide children with a supportive, caring, environment that develops self-esteem, self-motivation and a sense of responsibility. We will attempt to provide every opportunity for maximum student achievement. Our major goal is to prepare students to become responsible citizens and take their places as productive members of society.

The clear intent of recent Dade County school superintendents, notably Johnny Jones and Joseph Fernandez, has been to encourage the schools to reach out in a variety of ways and to promote various kinds of parent involvement. Superintendent leadership is credited for the development of one of the country's most extensive school-business partnership programs, Dade Partners, which involves thousands of large and small businesses and agencies.

STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS

To respond to this complex of local, state, and Federal formal policies and informal intents, the school has a multifaceted strategy, with three or more programs or projects in each of the six categories of family-community-school collaboration.

Comstock Parent and Community Involvement Programs in Six Categories

I. School Help for Families

* parent education workshops and GED and ESL classes

* the Parent Resource Center
* home visits by parent outreach workers
* health and human service referrals
* in-school pre-school day care provided by the YMCA

II. School-Home Communication

* parent-teacher conferences
* regular report cards
* open houses
* parent handbook
* an activity calendar
* communication in Spanish (and in some cases Haitian Creole) as well as English
* Dial-a-Teacher program and student homework club (by telephone and on cable TV)

III. Family Help for the School and for Teachers

* Parent Cooperative program in selected classrooms
* classroom volunteers
* parent assistance with field trips
* parent association fund raising
* several tutoring projects

IV. Family Involvement in Learning Activities at Home

* PEARLS, which provides teacher and commercially prepared lessons and games for parents to use at home
* parent checking of homework
* reinforcement of home teaching activities by home visitors

V. Involvement in Governance and Advocacy

* Comstock PTA
* School Advisory Committee
* bilingual parent advisory committee
* parent participation in planning and evaluation of funded projects such as the parent outreach program

VI. Collaboration and Exchanges with the Community

* participation in Dade Partners (partnerships with YMCA which provides an after-school care program at the school for 120 children, including games and snacks, from school dismissal time to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday)
* Lesteiro's Used Pallets
* Systems III
* Live and Let Live Drug Store, Red Lobster Restaurant, and the Allapattah Neighborhood Service Center
* Agreements with Florida International University for evaluation of Parent Co-op program. The school provides field experiences for interns from the University and

Florida Memorial College
* Cooperative drug prevention project with the Miami police department

Of this array of programs, there are four which the principal and assistant principals single out as most important to the school and most connected to increasing student success: 1) the Parent Cooperative Program; 2) a parent education program called PEARLS; 3) POP, the parent outreach program; and 4) an informal partnership with the Allapattah Neighborhood Service Center.

The Parent Cooperative Program

The principal believes that the Co-op Program has distinct benefit to the school through providing hands-on assistance in the classroom and benefit to participating parents who learn about education and child development and increase their parenting skills. There are four cooperative classes, one at each grade level from pre-K (four year olds) through grade 3.

The families of students in these classes commit themselves to a minimum of three hours a week to the classes. Some of the participating family members are mothers, others are grandmothers and aunts, and in a few cases, fathers. According to Principal Levin:

> During the time they are in the classrooms, they provide the students with individual help, group activities, and any other activity the teacher has designed for them..... We are very proud of this program and the accomplishments we have achieved, both with parents and students.

The Co-op Program provides workshops during the school year to orient the parents to the instructional and social objectives in the classes and to help the parents develop confidence and skills as classroom aides and in the relationships with the teachers.

There is an effort to provide both the children and the family members with "quality community experiences." These activities have included visits to the zoo, the beach, the supermarket, the public library, and the circus.

Outside help for the project comes from the Dade County's adult education office and from collaborative agreements with Florida International University, which is carrying out an evaluation of the social, affective, and cognitive growth of the children and the levels of parent involvement. The Cuban-American Planning Council is providing English lessons for those family members who need them.

One of the stated objectives that seems most salient is that of

increasing the family's interest in and motivation for education and their expectations for their child's success. Many of the participants are recent immigrants from war-torn Central American countries such as Nicaragua and El Salvador. For some of the children and families the Comstock is a first exposure to a safe and functioning educational environment.

The formal signed contract committing parent time to volunteer service in the classroom is one of the unusual features of this Co-op program, which is one of six in the county school system.

PEARLS

In the fall of 1989, two Comstock teachers, Flora Avila and Elena Arquelles, organized and ran a parent education project which they call PEARLS -- Parents who Encourage Achievement in Reading, Learning, and Self-esteem. They worked on an entirely voluntary basis and recruited other teachers, staff, and community members to help. The two originators are still coordinating the project and talk with great enthusiasm about it.

About 450 parents agreed in writing to attend six evening workshops during the year. The workshops are conducted by teachers, school counselors and other staff, and occasionally by representatives from community organizations.

The purpose is to promote direct involvement of family members in their children's education at home and in the school. The workshop topics included: helping the child improve test taking skills, increasing academic achievement through the use of games, helping your children complete and set up a science fair project; child and parent self-esteem, parent-child communication. Participants are also offered information about community agencies providing services in the area.

One of the special features of PEARLS has been the development of one inch thick grade-by-grade packets (teacher and commercially prepared) of lessons and learning aids for family members to use at home. Included are flash card games and activities to reinforce school objectives in reading and math.

Various workshop sessions were offered in Spanish, Haitian Creole, and English, and in other cases interpreters were offered, to respond to the very large percentage of participants whose primary language is not English. About 250 parents participated, with attendance at the individual workshops averaging about 160-180. The involvement of many of the school's 120 teachers and other instructional staff in the project is significant. The coordinators estimate that at least forty teachers (one-third of the faculty) have been directly involved during the 1990-91 school year.

POP -- Parent Outreach Program

A staff of six full-time Parent Outreach Workers was recruited, trained, and put to work (at $7.50 per hour) under the supervision of the school's full-time Chapter 1 Community Involvement Specialist. The staff cuts across the three main language and cultural groups in the school -- Hispanic, African-American, and Haitian. They have organized as proposed in the school's Chapter 1 plan a parent resource room which provides office space for the outreach workers, a place for parents to meet in the school, and displays of books, materials, and community information.

Home visits are the heart of this program. By the end of the school year in June, the workers expect to have visited 600 families in their homes. The school currently has approximately 1700 students enrolled. The workers say they do many things, including the following:

* provide information about the school: rules, curriculum, services, programs, events for parents;
* make referrals to the school counselors and to the Neighborhood Social Service Center;
* reinforce and assist with the learning materials provided by the PEARLS and Co-op programs;
* assist family members with forms and surveys for the school (and other agencies); and
* provide reassurance and encouragement about the importance of the school, of education, of the family's role in the development and learning of the child.

Partnership with Allapattah Neighborhood Service Center

A continuing partnership has been established (no written agreement) between the school and the Allapattah Neighborhood Service Center, a branch of the Metropolitan Dade County Department of Human Resources.

The director of the Center, German Izquierdo, is frequently in the school. He describes the Center as a source of information and "first aid," direct services for children and their families on every imaginable social service need. Teachers, administrators, the two school counselors, and the Parent Outreach Workers refer children and families to the Center.

The Center director describes the Comstock School as a "true community school," and says that it is quite different in its level of cooperation and responsiveness than most of the other

public schools in the same region or feeder pattern of Miami. He credits the principal's positive attitude toward the community for the strong ties that exist.

PROBLEMS AND BARRIERS

The school's high turnover rate of children -- 48% in 1990-91 -- is described by the principal as a major problem both for the school's instructional objectives and its aim to reach, assist, and involve a diverse group of parents. This rate is presented as a reality of schools in communities such as Allapattah, a poverty-stricken, changing community plagued with the problems associated with inner-city, port-of-entry neighborhoods.

Student achievement also remains a problem even though average test scores have risen over the past five years from the teens to mid-thirties and forties in terms of percentile rankings of scores in relation to national norms. Levin and his assistants put increasing student achievement for all of their children at the top of their list of objectives.

The principal will retire at the end of the 1990-91 school year. How and in what directions a new principal will affect the school's reaching out policies and programs are open questions, although the two assistant principals appear to share Levin's commitment to family and community partnerships.

The serious economic decline in Florida statewide and in Dade County, which is facing a large budget deficit, is a cloud over the school. However, those many parts of the reaching out strategy funded by Chapter 1 will not be affected by local budget cutbacks.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENT

This is a school that is doing many things right in light of research and expert opinion. There is a stated schoolwide ideology which stresses high expectations and success for all children consistent with the recommendations of many national commentators and researchers, including David Seeley and Henry Levin. There is attention to the physical, emotional, and social as well as the cognitive needs and development of the children as urged by James Comer. The school has established collaborations to try to meet these diverse needs as would be the case in Comer-model schools and provides specialized staffing -- counselors, community specialists, and six parent outreach workers.)

The instructional program features heterogenous group and cooperative learning (at least in some classes) along with a strong emphasis on basic skills.

With its Parent Co-op program beginning at age four Comstock has anticipated the nation's Education Goal #1 (all children begin school ready to learn).

Comstock has already anticipated the League of Schools Reaching Out recommendation to all of its member schools that they should seek to use Chapter 1 money to support parent outreach work.

Their PEARL's strategy follows Epstein's advice based on her extensive studies to provide materials that parents can use at home to help children's learning in key areas of math and reading.

Greater understanding of the Comstock Schools reaching out work can be gained by using the lens of our three part policy-program-context model. The most powerful formal policy influence on family-school-community practices at the Comstock school is Chapter 1. There is a consistency and clarity of intent -- from the intent and specific wording of the 1988 Federal amendments tc Chapter 1, to the state of Florida's response to this change, and most especially, to the strong and specific policy framework provided by the Dade County Public Schools. Providing $30 per child for a parent outreach program generated a direct and positive response at the Comstock School and such a program is in place.

There is also a positive match between the new Chapter 1 policy and the informal intent of the principal and assistant principal to promote parent involvement. Their response can be seen as being importantly shaped by the local school-neighborhood context -- a very large family constituency including many immigrants confronting the multiple stresses and problems of a poverty-stricken inner city neighborhood. Many of the immigrant families have had little experience with formal schooling themselves and lack the confidence and traditions of traditional in-school forms of parent involvement.

In this context, school strategies limited to in-school interventions to promote parent involvement will be inadequate and will fail to reach a very large number of the families of children most at-risk of social and academic failure. Aspects of the Comstock's strategy are well geared to the context -- Haitian Creole and Spanish speaking parent outreach workers from the community to visit homes to encourage families to help their own children at home; the emphasis on self-esteem in the Parent Outreach Program and PEARLS, and the parent education emphasis in the Parent Co-op program.

Similarly, the context in the Comstock School and its neighborhood suggests the need for comprehensive, coordinated health and human services for children and their families. There is no comprehensive Federal-state-local policy to foster this kind of collaboration, even though there is substantial national

and local interest in the topic.

There is a good beginning in this area with the informal arrangement between the school and the Allapattah Neighborhood Service Center. But this arrangement depends on the interest and good will of the Center director and a responsive principal. Other schools in the same area enjoy no such benefit.

The state and district policies creating school advisory committees provides a framework for parent participation in planning and local decision-making. Within the school system there are mixed signals about the intent of the policies and no strong monitoring or financial incentives. The result according to one informant, is that few of the county's schools have strong and effective advisory committees.

We hypothesize (although no direct evidence on this point was sought in this study) that the intent of most of the educators such as central office and school level administrators, teachers union officials, and classroom teachers is generally to promote parent and community involvement in all of the educational categories but to be resistant of parent involvement in decision-making. This same involvement-in-education-but-not-decision making emphasis can be found in the Chapter 1 policy framework at Federal, state, and district levels where involvement in educational and service activities and consultation are stressed, but participation, governance or advocacy is not actively sought.

The Comstock school's strategy reflects quite accurately its policy framework and its local context. With the exception of parent participation in governance the program interventions are fairly comprehensive, even if still inadequate to the level of services needed.

As is true in most urban public schools there has been neither time nor money for substantial research or evaluation of what Comstock is doing. Only sketchy data are available about the effectiveness of the many programs and strategies and their connections to children's learning. Nonetheless, the reaching out efforts are impressively varied, substantial, and well-designed. The administrators -- and, we can assume, many of the teachers and parents -- believe that these efforts will, over time, contribute to the social and academic success of all of the school's children.

MILES PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
CLEVELAND, OHIO
by Vivian R. Johnson

When a Ford Motor Stamping Plant assembly worker invites you to visit a first grade class where he frequently volunteers, you know you are in a special school. Any visitor to Miles Park Elementary School in Cleveland soon learns that a special feature of the school is the creative and diverse inclusion of families and the community in all aspects of school life. In addition to providing five volunteers who help in classrooms and provide additional black male role models in the school, the Ford Plant also hosted sixth grade children for a career day at the plant. While I was visiting the school, an executive called requesting children's art to exhibit at the company.

Recognition of the potential resource to the school of temporarily released workers from the Ford Plant is typical of the resourcefulness of the school principal who says that family and community involvement in education are a personal priority that she brought to the school when she became principal four years ago and she is always seeking additional ways to enhance involvement. "I believe schools must find better ways of reaching out to parents, businesses, churches, and organizations to get help to improve our schools." said Mildred O. Foster, the dynamic principal of Miles Park whose welcoming manner sets the tone for, and reflects the school climate. With the school's open door policy and the principal's style of comfortable collaboration with staff and parents, people are drawn to the school and actively participate in identifying diverse outreach activities to bring in others to help the school.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Remedial Order

The 1978 Remedial Order, the plan for desegregating the Cleveland Public Schools, provides the overarching policy framework for the inclusion of parents and community in school life in Cleveland. In 1987, the school district filed an Unfinished Compliance Agenda in U.S. District Court listing the work to be completed in order to bring the district into compliance with the Remedial Order. For each of the fourteen components of the Order, the District must have: policies and regulations, performance standards, information systems, corrective actions, yearly reporting, and school-community councils.

A school-community council is mandated for each school within the fourteen components of the Remedial Order covering reform of school organization, student rights, transportation, student assignments, testing and tracking, counseling, and finance and other areas. The council is an advisory body to the principal on:

school budget management, staffing, regulations, student achievement, instructional issues, discipline, school/community relationships and resources, parent/teacher relationships, school research needs, and school improvement priorities.

The councils must meet at least four times a year and each school district provides training for council members. While such councils are frequently pro forma in many cities, in this school, the council is effective. The council and the principal's effectiveness in working with it was acknowledged at the Cleveland Education Summit meeting in May 1991.

In addition to the councils, the district must make public information easily accessible and provide a mechanism for responding to community concerns. A yearly student handbook and calendar provides information in an accessible form and the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent schedule regular meetings with parents and community members interested in discussing school issues.

School-Wide Chapter 1 Program

In addition to policies related to the Remedial Order, Miles Park also operates within the framework of the school-wide Chapter 1 program under the changes made in the Chapter 1 legislation in 1988. Under that provision, schools with at least 75 percent low income children can use Chapter 1 funds for programs affecting the entire school.

Because 88.81% percent of the 560 children at Miles Park are from low-income families (as determined by free and reduced price lunch) the principal applied for school-wide Chapter 1 status and the school project plan was approved in 1989. The goals of the plan are: 1) to improve student achievement in basic skills using a "holistic instructional approach," 2) to increase parental participation in the educational process and 3) to resolve social-emotional barriers impeding the academic progress of students. The school-wide plan requires that Effective Schools research/strategies be evidenced in the project. Following is the statement from the school application:

> Miles Park is a second year Project Reform School (a two-year public school program focused on the implementation of Effective Schools Research) and the principal goals are to increase student achievement, improve school climate, increase parent involvement, provide for continuous assessment, and ensure strong principal leadership. To be successful, added personnel such as educational aides, social worker, parent liaison, and the assistant principal are needed. Program facilitators will assist in coordinating all of the above. (Chapter I Schoolwide Project Plan, item 4.)

Decentralization Plan and School-Based Management

The third policy which provides a framework in which school programs and activities occur is the Cleveland decentralization plan which gives responsibility to the schools for: budgeting, personnel selection, and regulation writing on many policies (as long as the policies adhere to district policy, court orders, and local state and federal laws). Budgeting of funds received is determined by each school. Money saved in one area can be used in another area. Personnel selection for each school is made by the principal in consultation with the School-Community Council from a group of interviewees sent from the City School Office.

Regulations on school level policies are written by the schools, so that dress codes, for example, may differ from school to school. The Miles Park Community Council voted to have school uniforms beginning in September 1991.

Cleveland Summit on Education

In addition to official policies promoting parental and community involvement in education, the gathering of 700 parents, students, teachers, principals and administrators, elected officials and business and civic leaders in a one day work session to seek action to improve the Cleveland schools represents a significant activity to stimulate policy.

The Cleveland Summit on Education held on May 22, 1990 was viewed as a community commitment and the first step in an ongoing process. A report of the Summit's proceedings and recommendations was widely circulated. Major outcomes from the action agenda included:

* A shared community vision about where Cleveland Public Schools should be in the Year 2000;

* The appointment of an Oversight Committee, representative of the community, to help guide the Summit process;

* A shared community action agenda for improving the Cleveland Public Schools which identifies short and long-term steps in nine key areas; and

* The establishment of nine implementation task forces to recommend specific plans in each area.

The nine task forces are: 1) educational assessment 2) models that foster educational achievement, 3) coordinated community plan: early childhood education, 4) full-day kindergarten, 5) enhancing self-esteem, 6) establishing school buildings as neighborhood resources, 7) coordinated in-school human services, 8) legislative watch, 9) increased parental/guardian involvement in the schools.

The chair of the task force on increased parental involvement is

a parent, and the principal and Parent Coordinator from Miles Park are both on the task force. The role of these groups is "...to take the ideas and concepts from the Summit and design the necessary steps to make the plans reality. The implementation groups are encouraged to openly debate strategies which will lead to a successful change process which will ultimately result in an improved school district." (The Cleveland Summit on Education Midterm Report, February 9, 1991, p. 3).

Informal Policies

All three of the formal policies above: The Desegregation Remedial Order, Chapter 1, the Decentralization Plan as well as the action agenda of the Summit on Education facilitate parental and community involvement in schools. However, it is through informal policies that pervade daily school programs and activities that the spirit, the intent, of these formal policies is promoted or impeded. Leadership, or lack of leadership, in promoting school-community collaboration rests with the school principal whose daily actions signal acceptance or rejection of the intent of the formal policies.

At Miles Park, the principal's actions set a tone for promotion of parental and community involvement as seen in her informal policies of:

* Inclusion. She includes parents in all school activities including policy-making, as well as grant-writing.

* Consultation. Parents are consulted about school activities, regulations, and school improvement strategies and programs.

* Information-sharing. By means of newsletters, conferences, phone calls, and home visits, information is shared.

* Acknowledgement. Contributions of teachers, parents, community volunteers and organizations are consistently acknowledged in reports, programs, ceremonies, newsletters, and informal conversation.

STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS

Significant programs, activities and strategies at Miles Park demonstrate the implementation of formal and informal policies to promote parental and community involvement.

Miles Park Elementary School Parent and Community Programs in Six Categories

I. SCHOOL HELP FOR FAMILIES

* GED classes in the school

* Computer classes for adults
* Child care for the above
* Extended day program and all-day kindergarten

II. SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION

* Newsletter
* Teacher/Parent conferences
* Yearbook
* Educational aide who makes home visits
* Student handbook and school rules

III. FAMILY HELP FOR SCHOOL AND TEACHERS

* Parents organized summer enrichment program for sixty children
* Parent tutors
* Classroom volunteers
* Field-trip assistance
* Breakfast and lunch-room aides
* Six educational aides from the community
* Parents organize special fairs and programs

IV. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT HOME

* "Parent-Child-Book," books and strategies for home learning
* "Bridges," hands-on discovery activities for home learning
* Reading is Fundamental (RIF) books for home use

V. INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE AND ADVOCACY

* PTA
* School Community Council
* Cleveland Summit on Education

VI. COLLABORATION AND EXCHANGES WITH THE COMMUNITY

* Ford Motor Stamping Plant, volunteers/mentors
* D.A.R.E. Drug-Abuse-Resistance-Education, with Cleveland Police Department
* T.E.A.M.S., teen mentoring program for upper grade students
* Churches provide volunteers and space for programs
* Harriet Tubman Museum provides space and program assistance
* Business partners provide volunteers, and equipment.

NOTEWORTHY PROGRAMS

Summer Enrichment Programs

A summer enrichment program has been initiated by two educational aides (parents) and implemented with the principal's and teachers' assistance in curriculum development. The summer program grew out

of concern about poor reading scores two years ago. The two parent aides decided to call all parents of children with poor reading scores. Enlisting the assistance of teenagers to help with younger children, the parents developed a school and community program for sixty-two children, K-6, for six weeks during the summer. Reading skills building, field trips to the zoo, and other enrichment activities combined to bring about improved behavior along with higher reading scores. As they enthusiastically recalled the hard work in developing the program, and their joy in observing children's improvement, one parent observed: "Let children know what you expect of them, and you won't have any trouble."

Collaboration to Promote Family Literacy

Several churches, as well as businesses and organizations, have adopted the school, thereby providing various types of assistance including funds, equipment, materials, and volunteers. Sometimes the partners provide matching funds as is the case with the school's receipt of a Reading is Fundamental (RIF) grant from Ameritech and the Smithsonian, and a local advertising company provided matching funds. RIF books related to African-American history were provided to children and parent in February following dramatic presentations by children in the auditorium of the Harriet Tubman Museum across the street from the school. During my visit, parents, museum staff, and Cleveland Foundation staff were planning and oral history program for the neighborhood. In addition, Miles Park School will join the Harriet Tubman Museum in developing programs with a school in Hudson, Ohio, the birthplace of John Brown. Children from both schools will study United States history of Ohio through the lives of two famous abolitionists.

PROBLEMS AND BARRIERS

A significant attribute of the Miles Park principal is her focus on goals and strategies rather than on problems and barriers. While acknowledging problems, she immediately mentions strategies that she is discussing with parents and teachers to address those problems. When acknowledging those problems over which she has no control, such as increasing economic difficulties for families in the school, she talks about ways in which the school might increase services for children and families.

She recognizes that expansion in services usually means more work for teachers and she is aware that teachers are already stretched in terms in additional time spent in outreach to families. She is therefore conscious of finding ways to "keep teachers with me" in working with parents and the community and not have them view outreach as ever expanding work for which they are unprepared and unrewarded. Problems are therefore avoided through consistent consultation and action by consensus.

A major problem that the principal cited is that of student

mobility which is a problem throughout the system in low income areas. Miles Park has 70-80% mobility each year. The principal recently reported that a major achievement of the Education Summit was agreement on a citywide policy that when families move within the city, children will stay in the school in which they are placed and the school will arrange transportation for the children. The new policy is under review by the judge who issued the Remedial Order because it involves consideration of the current transportation policy.

Another problem cited by the principal is the fluctuation in achievement test scores that has occurred in the 5th grade during the past four years while other grades have shown fairly steady improvement. Students' academic achievement is a major priority so the scores are carefully monitored each year.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENT

The Miles Park Elementary School case presented above provides the opportunity to consider propositions regarding the complex interaction between policy formulation and implementation. Following is a discussion of four propositions relating to this complexity.

The Commitment and Skill of the Principal and Factors Influencing School Outreach

School outreach to parents and community is an undertaking that requires additional time and effort in busy school schedules, therefore, outreach must be a priority concern or it is unlikely to be successful.

Parental involvement may be mandated by court orders, legislation or regulations. Funds may be available to promote parental involvement as is evident in the revised Chapter 1 provisions. However, little parental involvement or community collaboration will occur if principals are not committed to the idea.

Even with commitment, some principals find outreach presents overwhelming pressures of time and expanded expectations from teachers parents and community participants. The Miles Park principal provides an example of an administrator who works successfully amid these pressures. Her success is related to a number of factors of commitment and action. Highlighting her management style may illustrate significant factors that promote her success:

She is well informed. She knows how the educational system works at Federal, state, and local levels and how to make it work for her school and the broader community. Diverse public and private funding sources are pursued for programs of instruction, enrichment, drug-prevention, equipment, in-service training, and

expansion of family involvement in school activities. She attends conferences and other programs providing information about resources and shares information with staff and parents about diverse resources they might pursue to accomplish their goals.

She delegates. The ability to delegate authority and tasks and supervise the attainment of objectives is a special skill that principals must master if they are to successfully expand outreach to parents and communities. Principal Foster demonstrates her willingness to negotiate and share power with staff and parents. Parents initiate and direct programs and projects such as the summer enrichment program and the school yearbook. Parents write proposals and get programs funded. Parents attend meetings and make reports to staff and other parents. Six parents are educational aides who work with teachers in developing tutoring and other additional instructional assistance to children in an extended day program as well as in the classroom.

She facilitates. Closely related to delegation is the ability to facilitate goal attainment, to assist people on committees and task forces by providing information about resources and strategies. The Miles Park principal is a skillful facilitator who helps move individuals and committees with information, insight and suggestions; but she doesn't feel that she has to do it all herself.

She collaborates. School-Community collaboration in the inner city requires skill in working comfortably with people from diverse backgrounds who have often had negative school experiences. The ability to work with and learn from people from backgrounds different from one's own is a skill that is not usually refined in teacher training programs. However, the Miles Park principal demonstrates great skill in this area. Her comfortable style of inclusion attracts people to the school. Therefore, a high school student volunteers in the office on a free afternoon. The phys-ed teacher volunteers time after school to run a gymnastics program that is so successful that the students have performed at half-time at a professional basketball game. Parents, community residents, business people, and church leaders meet with her frequently to discuss ideas, suggestions, and strategies for school improvement.

In addition, she collaborates with community groups to gain additional human and financial resources for the school. Businesses, colleges, churches, and high school students provide these additional resources in collaborative efforts with the school in tutoring, special thematic programs, drug awareness and prevention, and instruction in science, math and Spanish.

<u>Federal, State, and Local Policy May Facilitate Parental and Community Involvement, but Principals' Informal Policies Greatly Influence Implementation of Formal Policies</u>

A significant aspect of the Miles Park principal's informal policy

is her approach to the use of Federal, state and local educational policies. She views them as resources on which she can draw to meet the needs of children and families in her school. It is important to highlight this attitude because some principals in our survey appear to view policies as barriers that keep things from happening. But by viewing policies as resources, the Miles Park principal identifies and uses those which support her school's goals and objectives and she combines funding from various levels and types of policies to carry out program.

The distinction between viewing policies as barriers as opposed to resources is important because it also determines the direction of policy influence. Given the view of policies-as-resources, the influence of policy is determined as much by the school's goals and objectives as by higher authority's mandates and requirements. Proceeding from the school's goals in meeting the needs of children and families, the Miles Park principal sought and received program funding from all three policy levels and combines the funding to support program objectives.

Examples include the fact that the school has a school-wide Chapter 1 program and the additional funds were used to hire six educational aides who are parents from the community. State funding is used for the GED program which has enrolled over 100 parents over the past three years and for the Family Life Education programs which provide home learning activities. Local funds have been used to purchase computers and classes are held for adults as well as children. Child care is provided in all programs for adults by combining funding from several sources. By viewing policies as means rather than barriers, the principal is able to identify and use those policies which work for the school.

In an article titled: "Classrooms Matter More Than Policies," Edward Pauly notes that "The only sensible way to judge an education policy is to look at how it affects the daily lives of teachers and students in classrooms." (Education Week. May: 1991, p.36). These "classroom support policies" are, he notes, actions taken by principals to help teachers and students. Similarly, in parental outreach activities, principals are best placed to take actions to promote collaboration between schools and families. It is they who develop, or fail to develop, informal policies such as Inclusion, Information-sharing, Consultation, Acknowledgement which undergird formal policies. Examples of the Miles Park principal's informal policies in these areas follow.

Inclusion -- Parents travel to other cities and states with the principal to see programs in other schools and parents attend conferences such as the Education Summit with her.

Information-sharing -- In addition to sharing information about educational and personal enrichment opportunities, the principal shares information about school policies, procedures, and strategies in ongoing discussion with staff, parents and the

community through a daily in-school newsletter and a monthly external newsletter.

Consultation -- Staff and parents are consulted in formal as well as informal meetings regarding suggestions for activities, strategies, and programs to achieve school goals and objectives. The principal has a collaborative manner, so that in discussion with someone about an issue, she may suggest including others in the discussion to get additional ideas or suggestions about the issue. An obvious advantage is that everyone feels included and knows their ideas will be respected. That is a very important aspect of relationships between school authorities and local communities in the inner city because distrust is so common in these relationships. Inner-city parents and other community residents with less education than school authorities often report that they are excluded or their ideas are disregarded in decision-making about schools.

Acknowledgement -- Acknowledgement of contributions and achievement is a very significant aspect of informal policy because it clearly signals respect. The principal's statements in the newsletter, in informal conversations and in formal meetings about the contributions of parents, staff, and community people to the operation and promotion of school activities sends a message of reinforcement about her attitude toward collaboration.

<u>Coherent Programs and Strategies are Needed to Achieve the Goals of a Reaching Out School</u>

In order to develop effective programs to achieve goals, those goals must be clearly stated, known and shared by staff and parents in a school. School-wide goals articulated by principal, staff and parents at Miles Park focus on three areas: improved student achievement in basic skills, increased parental involvement, and improving school climate and decreasing emotional barriers that impede academic progress for children.

Programs are developed to achieve these goals and the theme that reinforces the school goals is "Busy Bees" which is used on hall attendance and achievement charts, the yearbook and newsletters.

Coherent programs to achieve school goals have been developed across the six categories of home-school interaction as discussed earlier. Outstanding features of these activities include a parent initiative in organizing a summer enrichment program for sixty-two children because of concern about poor reading scores. Implemented with assistance in curriculum development from the principal and teachers, the parents got teenagers to help with younger children in reading skills development and field trips for six weeks during the summer.

Cross-grade project development is another feature of the program because teenagers are trained to serve as mentors for the

elementary students in a drug-prevention and academic achievement activity. Community residents participate in the school in diverse projects including a program in which senior citizens go to the school to provide oral history about the neighborhood.

Funding for all these projects is provided by combining federal, state, and local public funds as well as business and foundation sources.

Successful Outreach to Parents Addresses Their Needs, Facilitates Their Assistance in Home Learning, and Supports Family Life

At Federal, state and local levels, family support policy is evolving that challenges educators to broaden the view of "educating the whole child". In a report in Education Week, February 14, 1990, Lisa Jennings notes a proposal that:

> ...state education agencies require all schools to develop family support initiatives that would be included among criteria for accreditation.

She also notes the recommendation from the Council of Chief State School Officers that:

> Schools collaborate with local governments, agencies, community and social organizations, and business and industry to develop incentives for family involvement.

The challenge of providing outreach that is responsive to family needs is addressed by Miles Park by its provision of GED and computer classes for parents to address their needs, the availability of three programs to promote home learning: "Parent-Child-Book," the "Bridges" discovery program, and the child care program, including extended-day kindergartens to support families.

Collaboration with outside agencies funded under Federal, state and local policies (especially the State Adult Basic Education and the Family Life Education programs) provides expanded funding and staffing. The collaboration also promotes a more comprehensive approach to program implementation.

Greater collaboration may also be the key to improvement of achievement test scores for fifth grade students and greater increases for other students in the school. The principal noted that the use of computers since October 1990 seems to have had a positive effect on achievement scores for the 1991 period. Perhaps computer use could be expanded through an individualized tutoring program using volunteers from colleges or corporations in the larger community.

At Miles Park School, such collaboration is part of daily school life and it is viewed as an ongoing resource.

SHAED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, DC
by Vivian R. Johnson

Open classrooms provide a continuous flow of sound to the visitor to Shaed Elementary School in Northeast Washington, D.C. Named for two African-American sisters, Alice and Ernestine Shaed, who each taught in the D.C. public schools for thirty years, the modern facility is located in a residential neighborhood. In addition to open classrooms, the school is open to the neighborhood through a number of outreach activities. On Saturday mornings once a month, for example, neighborhood residents can pick up $35.00 packages of nutritionally sound groceries they have ordered for $13.00 in a program called SHARE that is funded by Catholic Charities and the D.C. Recreation Department.

The Before and After Care program, also provided by the D.C. Recreation Department, provides child care at the school from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. daily and all day when regular school is closed. The director of the Before and After Care program, though unpaid during school hours, chooses to remain at the school during the hours when children are in school to help out in their classes and find out about curriculum so that he can help them with homework in the After Care program. I visited the school the day after his awards banquet at which he gave a rose to every woman who attended and awards to children, parents, teachers, and staff at the school for their assistance in the program.

Outreach to parents and community has not always been so active. Brenda T. Richards, the dynamic principal, says the turning point came when the school made a policy that parents come to pick up report cards. She said that she was looking for a way to increase parental involvement when she became principal four years ago and found a PTA without much parental participation. As the only child of a principal in a one-room school house in a rural area on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, she said she watched her mother collaborate with families in carrying out school activities and she believes that is the way schools and families should function.

As a student at Howard University, Richards was impressed by all the museums and other free activities in the District and she decided that she would do everything possible to help children and their families take advantage of those resources. The result is an array of programs that include the "Parade of Arts" in which parents join their children and the staff at cultural events at the Kennedy Center and a "Great Books Seminar" for gifted and talented children who meet on Saturdays to discuss the classics. Also held on Saturday mornings is a monthly hands-on science and math class for 55 parents and children sponsored by the National Urban Coalition and the Shell Oil Company.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Formal Policy

The D.C. Public Schools have no formal mandate requiring parental and community involvement in education. There are, however some formal policies which influence participation. On the principals' evaluation instrument, there is a section relating to parent involvement and community participation. In education plans that principals develop each year, there is an indication of activities to be undertaken to expand this area. Mid-year ratings and end-of-the-year reports include evaluation of principals on parent involvement and community participation, so the instrument provides a framework for planning and evaluation of home-school collaboration.

While teachers' evaluations contain language about serving parents as clients, evaluation of teachers in this area is not as explicit as it is for principals. Explicit policy regarding teachers' requirements in this area are contained in the union contract which requires teachers to meet with parents at PTA four times a year.

An additional requirement for teachers to meet with parents is in the Student Progress Plan which is part of the promotion policy. That policy requires that teachers meet (before the next PTA meeting) with parents of youngsters in danger of being retained in the grade.

Chapter 1 and Head Start

Federal policies regarding parent participation in two programs operating in the school appear to have a substantial impact. Both Chapter 1 and Head Start programs require that parents be included in several ways, and the existence of these programs brings parents into the school. In addition, home visits are made by the Head Start staff.

School Formal Policy

The Shaed statement of philosophy contains language about the importance of outreach to parents and the community. The policy that reinforces that statement is that parents are required to come to school to pick up children's report cards three of the four reporting periods. Principal Richards urged this change in policy when she came to the school four years ago in order to increase parental participation. When parents come to pick up report cards, there are other events including children's recitations, an art display, and door prizes.

Informal Policy Context

Informal, but very influential policy operates in the District schools promoting parental and community outreach through awards and ceremonies. The outgoing Superintendent included a parent/community relations award among those presented to administrators at an annual awards event. Recipients of this reward were recommended by parents and community residents of their schools. In addition, principals' ability to get volunteers to assist in schools is recognized as an important achievement and is one of the items that the Shaed principal notes as an important component on the principals evaluation instrument. She noted that special invitations are prepared to distribute to volunteers for a yearly ceremony in which they are thanked and various awards are presented.

Principal's Informal Policy

The principal's participation in community events and attendance at community meetings represents informal policy that influences school-community relations. In addition to attending these events herself, she asks teachers to represent the school if she cannot attend and therefore encourages teacher-outreach. Outreach is also encouraged by inclusion of diverse community groups in school activities such as Trinity College professors and students in various school activities including counseling and the arts.

Two other informal policies are significant in the school. One is the principal's policy of personal contact with parents to request that they call other parents to share information and the other is the policy of greater inclusion of custodians in the life of the school. One custodian is a photographer and on his lunch hour, he teaches photography to a group of boys. This type of inclusion is important because it signals willingness to include staff who are not often involved in curricular activities and the signal sends an important message that diverse participation in the school is welcome.

Three Citywide Organizations

The District of Columbia has no effective formal mandate that requires neighborhood school councils. The word "effective" is important in this context, because the Executive Director of the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights pointed out that during the early 1970's, two such councils were mandated by the D.C. School Board for the Adams-Morgan and Anacostia neighborhoods. The School Board then attempted to mandate neighborhood councils for all schools, but: "... all of the councils have fallen into disuse." Instead, there are three independent and effective citywide advocates for parent participation in the District: Parents United, Washington Parent Group Fund and, Washington Lawyers Committee For Civil Rights Under Law.

Parents United

An advocacy group that started in 1980 after a budget crises, this group now has representatives in about 130 of the 180 schools. While they are not part of the formal school structure, they are reported to be influential in advocacy efforts for school improvement.

Washington Parent Group Fund

Operating outside the formal school system, but successful in promoting parent participation in it, this group receives funds from the businesses and foundations to further parental participation in schools and to provide enrichment activities for children and families.

The Shaed principal reports that there are two parent representatives in the school who meet when needed to determine what funding to apply for and to help monitor the expenditure of funds received. They also attend quarterly meetings of the city-wide Parent Group Fund.

Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law

This legal and research arm of the organization represented the two neighborhood school boards which had mandated community councils: Adams-Morgan and Anacostia. It continues to provide pro-bono advice for D.C. schools and to engage in research and advocacy activities in support of school improvement. In providing pro-bono legal assistance for Shaed parents, a volunteer attorney is currently assisting in a suit against a local retailer for non-delivery of school uniforms.

STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS

Shaed Elementary School Parent and Community Involvement Programs in Six Categories

I. School Help for Families

* Before and After-Care: Before and after-school care funded by D.C. Recreation Dept from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and all day when school is closed. Dinner is provided and a monthly meeting of parents is held.

* "SHARE" - a cooperative buying program funded by Catholic Charities and D.C. Recreation in which families pay $13.00 for a $35.00 bag of nutritionally sound groceries.

(All of the activities below represent school help for families because they provide Saturday learning activities for children and in some cases for parents as well.)

* Hands-on science program
* Trips for parents and teachers to cultural events.
* "Great Books" seminar in which fifth and sixth graders meet bi- weekly on Saturdays to discuss the classics.

II. School-Home Communication

* One third to one half of the staff makes home visits, including all third and sixth grade, Head Start and special needs teachers.
* Parent-school conferences and regular report cards.
* School handbook, fliers, announcements, and an activities calendar.

III. Family Help for the School and Teachers

* Wednesday Martial Arts Program
* Parents and retired community people volunteer in classes, for field trips, and special events.
* Shaed Parent Group Fund representatives raise funds and monitor distribution for special programs. They wrote proposals to the Washington Parent Group Fund to secure $2 for each $1 raised by Shaed parents.

IV. Parent Involvement in Learning Activities at Home

Other than those activities which involve students and parents in learning activities at school which may continue at home, there are no specific activities that are designed for home learning.

V. Involvement in Governance and Advocacy

* Active PTA which is a strong advocate with the community and the central administration in requesting changes for school improvement.
* Chapter 1 and Head Start parent groups involved in advocacy to assist and improve service delivery.
* Neighborhood Advisory Council for the "SHARE" food purchasing program. Policies include unlimited number of purchases per family. Approximately 155 persons are served.

VI. Collaboration With the Community

Outreach in this area is especially impressive because of the range of activities and organizations involved.

* In "Our Volunteer Efforts," children from the school volunteer in various activities to raise money for the Red Cross and the Easter Seal campaigns. In addition

children prepare Easter baskets for senior citizens in the community.

* "Know to Say No" and "SMAD," two national drug awareness campaigns which include teachers manuals and weekly leadership training for students. National Kiwanis Clubs are a sponsor.
* "METCON" Howard University and University of District Columbia work with hands-on science and math activities for upper-grade students.
* Dance Place, a dance theater within walking distance gives 60 seats to students from the school for performances.
* "Grandparents' Day" -- recognition of the special role of grandparents in young peoples' lives. A Grandparents' Club is proposed which will include special cross-age events.
* "Kindness Club" -- Bimonthly club meetings with the Washington Humane Society to learn about animals.
* Metropolitan Police facilitate biweekly leadership training for at-risk youth.
* A number of churches in the area work with the school in special events and have monthly "Great Potential" presentations to 5th and 6th graders. In addition there is a Summer Outreach program of Friday morning activities sponsored by the churches in July and August.
* A mural project is planned in which parents will work with students. It is funded by community sponsors including Trinity College.

NOTEWORTHY PROGRAMS

Partnership/Trinity College

Shaed has a formal partnership with Trinity College, which is located a few blocks from the school. The college provides a wide range of services. These include: interns in math and science, individual and small group counseling and paired reading programs for students and parents. Principal Richards was the recipient of the Presidents' Medal of Honor at Trinity graduation in 1990 and she teaches a course in reading at the college. Shaed promotion activities for sixth graders were held at Trinity in June 1991.

Afterschool and Saturday Learning Activities

Shaed offers a range of programs for families and children during afterschool hours and on Saturdays. "Say Yes" is a hands-on science program held monthly on Saturdays for children and parents. The "Parade of Arts" program involves trips to cultural events at the Kennedy Center for parents, staff, volunteers, and students on Saturday afternoons. The PTA funds a Wednesday Martial Arts Program after school for 40 students and is instrumental in advocacy on behalf of the school and to the

larger community and the central administration.

PROBLEMS AND BARRIERS

The problems and barriers noted by the principal relate to the need for additional time and staff to expand services in response to social problems that are intensified by the current economic crisis. She notes the following problems in this regard:

1. Insufficient staff: no vice principal because the school has fewer than 600 students.

2. Escalating social problems, economic, drug-related, and the fact that 50% of crimes in the city are in the ward where the school is located.

3. Lack of adequate support services (She has gotten counseling services from the Trinity College Psychology Department, but the need is greater than available services).

4. Inadequate time to network with community agencies, call parents, write proposals, make additional contacts, and provide family support services.

In addition to the problems and barriers mentioned above, a major problem at the school is the fact that sixth grade students' achievement scores went down in reading, math, science and social studies from the 1988-89 to the 1990-91 school year.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENT

Context, Issues, Strategies

Shaed is a school that is trying to address basic human needs as well as basic educational needs. The programs in which families receive food baskets from churches, and the Saturday SHARE program in which community residents can purchase $35.00 worth of food for $13.00 are examples. The current economic crisis has hit the area very hard. Along with economic problems there are problems of crime and drugs.

In order to address the needs of families, the principal, teachers, other staff and parents are working to make Shaed a community school which draws on the strengths of the community and its human and organizational resources to provide services and learning activities for children and their families. Therefore, an extensive array of enrichment activities using local resources operate in or through the school before and after regular school hours as well as on weekends and in the summer.

While not a formal policy, the active demonstration of anchoring

the school in the community as a resource for families conveys a powerful message of concern and commitment. A critical feature of the message is the recognition of positive attributes and valuable resources in a community that is often portrayed negatively because of the high incidence of crime and drug-related problems.

The message is also closely connected to the principal's informal policy of community participation through attendance and speaking at churches, civic organizations, and neighborhood events. When she cannot attend, she asks teachers to represent the school. In addition, representatives of neighborhood groups are welcomed into the school as speakers, volunteers, and members of governance groups.

At the level of daily school activity, the influence of formal policy, while providing context, is not as obvious nor as powerful as the influence of the informal policies which reflect principals' and teachers' attitudes about the importance of parent and community involvement in schools. At Shaed, the informal policy of school personnel's participation in community activities and drawing diverse elements of the community into the school reflect a positive attitude toward outreach.

Several aspects of the school's context demonstrate why the need for additional assistance provided by outreach is critical for the achievement of success for all children.

In an area with a large number of children in need of special services, there is no counseling staff and no vice-principal. Local policy permits the addition of a vice principal based on numbers only and the school is under 600 students and is therefore not eligible for a second administrator. Counseling support has been enlisted through outreach, to the Trinity College psychology department and to a retired social worker who volunteers at the school and makes referrals to a family center. Need clearly exceeds capacity.

The school has primarily open classrooms. Additional adults are required to assist small groups of students and reduce distraction in the open settings. Since there are few private settings in the school in which students can receive individual or small group assistance, most of this activity occurs in large open areas with lots of activity. Additional tutors and aides to work with children in alternative areas would help to expand th instructional program. Perhaps a group of students from nearby Trinity College could be trained to provide this service.

A major problem in the school which makes the need for additional assistance even greater is that achievement test scores fell in reading, math, science, and social studies in grade six from 1988-89 to 1989-90. The major strategy to address this problem has been to increase assistance to students by bringing in all

resource elements in the community including: parents, college students and professors, organizations, churches, civic groups, civic leaders, police, and retired persons.

The idea is to create a helping community that matches the concern and talent in the area with the needs of students and families. The school, therefore, has an array of programs and activities sponsored by community groups. Results of 1990-91 achievement tests will determine whether or not the strategy is successful.

A second strategy proposed by the principal is to begin a GED class for parents. She said that there are many more younger parents now than there were a few years ago and often in need of basic education. She therefore believes that a GED program would both assist the parents and be a step toward the development of home learning activities which aren't now part of school-home collaboration. Certainly the fact that all teachers in grades three and six as well as Head Start and special needs staff are currently making home visits could be a great reinforcement for home learning activities.

Home learning activities would expand the program of home-school collaboration and the principal's informal policies within four significant components that reflect a positive attitude toward parental and community involvement. These components are:

* Information-sharing through newsletters, fliers, phone calls, home visits, and attendance at local events to promote outreach and broaden the network of knowledgeable parents and community residents who might contribute to school improvement for children.

* Inclusion of parents and community residents along with teachers in a broad range of school activities such as planning, evaluation, fund-raising, proposal writing, instruction, governance, and program development.

* Consultation with teachers, parents, and community residents about strategies and programs to achieve social and academic success for all children. Outreach to the Trinity College psychology department for counseling services is an example of this informal policy.

* Acknowledgement of the outreach activities and collaborative work of teachers, parents and community volunteers in written documents as well as awards ceremonies and programs is also part of the principal's informal strategy.

While these informal strategies combine to promote school-parent-community collaboration; a comprehensive approach to academic improvement seems to be called for to improve students' achievement in basic skills. Given the principal's interest in

developing basic skills programs that include parents, perhaps an Even Start program would be a useful model for the school to consider because it would provide a more comprehensive strategy of basic skills development for parents and children with a single funding source. The skills program could be worked into the "community school" approach now underway at the school by the inclusion of after-school, Saturday and summer classes for parents and children.

Given the pressing need to find approaches that improve children's academic achievement, the school might also consider a very focused program in reading and math in which all the staff, parents and volunteers work with children in a concerted manner on specific skills development with careful monitoring and evaluation. This approach would reinforce the communal spirit that is developing in the school and connect it to a comprehensive and well-focused developmental program for academic improvement.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JUNIOR
MIDDLE SCHOOL
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

by Nick Donohue
and Patricia Burch

INTRODUCTION

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle Schools sits, as many schools do, like a puzzle before those who would enter. The "main entrance" rests high above the sidewalk, a defiant acropolis shut tight to deter the abrasive elements that threaten the school -- gangs and the violence that comes with them. These uninviting front doors tell the approaching visitor, "There is another way in -- Good luck finding it." Careful investigation discovers a worn sign, pointing to an "entrance" around the corner. The word "Parents" is barely visible at the top. A short trip around the side reveals the portals, plain and green, and the search for the doorbell begins. There is little that would tell the untrained eye that this was more than a seldom used fire exit, however like many of this city's schools this is the true "main entrance."

Once inside, the school seems like many others -- possibly a bit quieter -- but still brown-glossy bricked, student's work out on the walls. The cool air is a refreshing benefit of the ancient rock solid design.

This is where the commonalities with other schools end. Immediately upon entering the office, there is an uncommon air of reception. The secretary quickly acknowledges the visitors' presence and offers a seat. A prominent sign reads "The King United Can Never Be Defeated."

The Beginning

Many people refer to the principal of this school as the driving and originating force behind its bold and successful efforts to engage parents. The principal, Steven Leonard, echoes the statement posted in the offices strongly and often. He is a firm advocate of parent involvement, and yet when he came to the school in 1986 a base of positive experience with parents had been laid.

In 1983, a small school-within-a-school experiment called "New Horizons," in which four class "clusters" formed the core of the program, was instituted at the King. A basic tenet of that program was a strong connection between families and the school. A newsletter and phone calls between home an school were regular features. Some of the staff, not all, had seen first-hand the benefits of connecting with families as a way of making a difference for students. So when Leonard joined the school as principal, the scene was set for a continued focus on parent

involvement. In addition to Leonard, the King's parent liaison, Jackie Burnett, is a primary "actor" in the school's parent involvement efforts.

The King serves approximately 430 students in grades 6,7 and 8. Of these, 52% are Black, 40% Hispanic, 5% White, and 3% Other. Most of the students come from low-income families.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Like all schools, the King exists in a swirl of Federal, state, local, and school-based policies. The following is a summary listing of those "formal" policies that impact parent involvement at the King.

Formal Policies

The Court Order

In 1974, as part of his now famous Desegregation Orders, Judge J. Arthur Garrity, established the Citywide Parents' Council (CPC). This organization, residing in the school system's Central Office, was established to represent parents' interests. It oversees the election and overall operations of School Parent Councils (SPC). The SPC is an elected body that is meant to represent each schools' parent body. Its official functions include performing an evaluation of the principal.

Chapter 1

The 1988 Stafford-Hawkins Amendments provide that any school in which 75% or more of the students are eligible for free lunch monies may use their Chapter 1 funds on a "school-wide" basis. The King does not qualify under this provision (72.4% are eligible for free lunch). They use the money they do have to fund a teaching position. The little excess money is used for materials and other sundry items and activities.

Chapter 636

Developed in 1986-87, the Massachusetts' desegregation statute Chapter 636 Omnibus Plan was designed to support the implementation of a variety of "prototypes" that would lead to school improvement. The plan envisions a three-year plan of development for each school. These prototypes are spread across seven "priority areas." They are: Reading, Math, Linguistic Minority Support, At-Risk, Academic Talented and Gifted, Cultural Enrichment Programs and Professional Development.

The King received $60,682 yearly to fund a Home Base School-Within-A-School model. These monies were used primarily to fund its Parent Liaison position.

Chapter 188

In 1985, the Massachusetts Legislature passed the Public School Improvement Act (Chapter 188). This legislation was designed to stimulate educational improvement on a statewide basis. Chapter 188 provides, among other things, that any school seeking monies from the School Improvement Fund establish a School Improvement Council (SIC) in order to assess needs and thus justify requests for aid. The King maintains an SIC -- which is incorporated into its other governance bodies -- and receives less than $1,000 a year through this act.

A Carnegie School

The King is a "Carnegie School." This means they receive state monies to support their activities as a "site-based management school." These funds are made available through Chapter 188 of 1985. These activities include the convening of a school-site governance council. Parents, teachers, administrators, and community members sit together on this council and formulate school-based policy. The program was formally adopted by the state in 1985 and went into effect in 1986. The King has received about $30,000 a year through this program.

Controlled Choice

Boston is in the third year of a controlled choice plan that allows families to select their top three choices from among their "Zone's" schools. The city is divided into four zones: three geographic -- that include most of the elementary and middle schools -- and one citywide zone for the high schools. The four zones have different racial guidelines that match their population. Each student entering the Boston Public Schools signs up for at least five schools within his or her zone. Assignments are made through a three-round lottery intended to insure that the zone racial guidelines are met.

School-Based Management/Shared Decision-Making (SBM/SDM)

The current contract between the Boston Teacher's Union (BTU) and the school department (Court Street) provides for the voluntary adoption of School-Based Management/Shared Decision-Making (SBM/SDM) by those schools wishing to do so.

While implementation was delayed almost a year because of legal actions concerning the awarding of contracts systemwide, schools were finally "brought on board," in the words of one Court Street official, in the spring of 1990. The King was one of the first eighteen schools to adopt SBM/SDM.

The agreement provides that each school have a specific proportion of parents and teachers serve on a governing board. In the King's case, this means that six teachers and four parents

sit with the principal as official school-site council members.

SBM/SDM in Boston is still in its formative stages. The incentives for participating schools include some flexibility of hiring procedures, authority to allocate some of the school's overall budget and access to a growing array of training opportunities. In addition to these more formal perks, the program is intended to offer schools the advantage of community participation in decision-making.

"The King United Will Never Be Defeated"

This homegrown motto is the central policy of this school's community. The phrase strikes a resonant chord. Unity is the loudest note of that chord. "The King" means everyone -- parents, family, staff, administrators, students, community friends, and business partners.

This Positive Learning Environment

This phrase is prominently displayed in the principal's office and throughout the building. A corollary is that "all children can learn." These two messages are repeated frequently.

Informal Policies

In addition to these "formal" policies, there are a myriad of "informal" policies that influence the school's operations. These exist across the spectrum of Federal, state, local, and school-based domains. In as much as they are informal and most often "unofficial" and largely unwritten, listing them is problematic. However, the following is a beginning list of school district informal policies that affect parent involvement efforts at all of Boston's schools, not just the King.

Ask Forgiveness Rather Than Permission

With the advent of SBM/SDM in Boston has come the above informal policy. This directive has been articulated "off the record" by a number of school department personnel, including those most closely connected with the coordination of the program. It suggests that while the system may not lead in terms of approving of revolutionary changes, if you make them and they don't work, you'll be forgiven.

Gentlemen's Agreements

Another popular informal policy is that of "looking the other way" and of making "gentlemen's agreements." For example, when asked if a particular school would lose a staff position because of successful mainstreaming efforts, a prominent central office worker responded, "If you try something new and it doesn't cost more, we will look the other way" when it comes time to excusing

personnel.

Every School For Itself

Unfortunately as resources become more scarce, natural allies turn against one another. During the recent slew of budget reductions a letter was circulated asking for the dissolution of a certain tier of teaching professionals. This request came from another group of teachers. In the words of one principal, "Now it's dog eat dog."

Likewise, there is a hesitancy to share ideas that work between schools in part because of this competition. "How can schools be expected to share fundraising expertise, with so little money available?", pleads an experienced grantwriter.

STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS

The King has a wide variety of Parent Involvement Strategies and Programs which fall within each of the six categories of family-community-school collaboration.

King Parent and Community Involvement Programs in Six Categories

I. School Help For Families

* Parent education workshops
* social service referrals
* Homework Hotlines
* in-school child care for visiting parents
* Home Visitor program for chronic tardiness and academic assistance
* staffed parent center form the core of the King's resources for families.

II. School-Home Communication

* parent information packets (includes a question guide for parents to use with teachers during a conference, a mutual pledge between teacher/parent and student to support his/her education, information about the special programs, a checklist for preparing for a phone call to the school)
* regularly updated parent, staff and student handbooks
* informational letters sent home
* phone calls by school staff as needed
* an automated phone dialing system that reaches all homes with phones.

III. Family Help For Schools And Teachers

* Participating and attending schools events

* volunteering in the classroom
* tutoring students
* fundraising
* reaching out to other parents
* helping on field trip
* volunteering with office tasks

IV. Involvement in Learning Activities At Home

* a lending library
* prepared materials for parents to use at home
* workshops on how to use those materials
* a home-based Read-Aloud program

V. Involvement in Governance Decision-Making and Advocacy

Starting with the New Horizons initiative in 1983, continuing with their participation as a Chapter 188 sponsored School Improvement Council and Carnegie School, and culminating with their involvement with Boston's version of School-Based Management/Shared Decision-Making (SBM/SDM), the King has a long history of including parents as decision-makers.

* School Parent Council (SPC)
* a Bilingual Parent Advisory Council (BPAC)
* school-site council

VI. Collaboration and Exchange With The Community

* business partnerships with the Shawmut Bank of Boston, Coopers and Lybrand - provides tutors, mentors, and pen pals as well as occasional generous support of large capital ventures such as a new IBM computer lab.
* collaboration with Spaulding and Slye construction firm - teaches the kids about how buildings are made
* college/university collaboration: 60 Harvard Business School graduates work one on one with special education students
* collaboration with community based organizations: The Boys and Girls Club, Roxbury Multi-Service Center, Alianza Hispana, Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion (Puerto Rican Tenants Association), Roxbury Comprehensive Community Health Center, Boston Youth Development Center, the Hispanic Office of Planning and Evaluation's (HOPE) Talent Search, and the "I Have A Dream" program that funds some students' college education.

NOTEWORTHY PROGRAMS

Parents Center - The Center of Activity

A small, but well-used Parents' Office is the center of parent involvement activities. The office is located right near the

principal's office because many visitors want to meet with the principal first. The office's location conveys a message that parent involvement is high up in priorities at the King.

The office is home to many - not just parents - at the King. Old couches and a microwave provide a cozy and inviting atmosphere. The smell of popcorn entices even the most leery of visitors. But, the office is more than just a warm place for parents to hang out. The office has a telephone, file cabinets, a conference room, and lots of materials and resources for parents to take home. This makes the Parents Office a real office that encourages parents to become an integral part of the inner functioning of the King.

The Parents' Office grew out of a principal's vision and the dedication of a staff member to reach out to as many parents as possible. This well-organized, charismatic Parent Liaison--Mrs. Jackie Burnett--visited the homes of every student to find out how to reach more families. Soon, it became obvious that a special place was needed <u>in the school</u> that was reserved for parents.

On any given day Mrs. Burnett, a seemingly tireless, ever-optimistic worker, can be found helping a parent with a school department form, finding someone to translate, helping a particular student, planning a classroom volunteer program with teachers, calling and visiting homes of those who frequently miss school and, most importantly, engaging others in the name of parent involvement. "We try and connect with parents by being part of their solution rather than part of their problem."

Through the Parents' Office, active parents have engaged the surrounding community to become more involved in school. For example, a group of parents went to Shawmut bank to enlist their help with finding the school more computers. Sometimes the community pitches in as in the case with a visiting nurse who arranged to have 7th graders immunized for free when she discovered that many of them did not have health insurance. Mrs. Burnett points out that while there are examples of coordination with the community, more could be done but more initiative has to come from the community.

<u>Parent-Teacher Planning Meetings</u>

Over the past years, the King School has been restructured into clusters where educational planning decisions are made. Future plans at the King include bringing parents into this planning process. A new cluster called, "Can't Touch This," has been funded by the League of Schools Reaching Out. This cluster would include three regular sixth grade homerooms, three special education homerooms, one "advanced work" homeroom, and a seventh grade homeroom.

Parents will be involved in discussions about "curriculum, instructional models, group dynamics and peer pressure, and study habits" (from school's proposal). Participation by parents will be expanded by holding informal meetings in people's homes. Participants will also be encouraged to participate by rewarding them in a number of ways. For example, parents assuming a role in finding topics that are interesting to parents or who keep parents informed about discussions would be paid a stipend. Another example is giving parents, who attend meetings, discounts on movies and other entertainment or for clothing.

PROBLEMS AND BARRIERS

Staff and parents can quickly identify a number of barriers to increasing parent involvement.

Some are general problems including time -- or the lack of it -- due to employment requirements, other priorities such as food, clothing, health, and survival. More concretely, the absence of telephone service in many homes reduces the school's ability to reach out. Face-to-face encounters are seen as crucial to building the kinds of relationships necessary for real inclusion, these are often proceeded by a phone call. Thus, visits are used if no other communication is possible and/or effective. However, with limited resources there are just so many visits the school can make.

Another perceived barrier, as one parent put it, is "teacher closed-mindedness or unwillingness to be more open to parents coming into the school with a 50-50 attitude on things other than bake sales." While there is a firm school-based policy that insists on parent involvement, the reality is that many teachers are still lukewarm about parents playing a greater role.

While many parents are connected at the King, there are pockets of those who still are not. Parents of special education students communicate with their respective teachers, but they are not part of the larger community as much as some would like.

There are also fewer wealthy and Spanish bilingual families than there could be attending the school. Leonard would like to see an increase in these populations and has hope via the choice program mandated by law and subsequent recruitment process.

Visions

When asked about hopes for the future, in terms of parent involvement the answer was simple yet sweeping. "We would like to have every parent involved." Having more special education parents involved in particular was also mentioned.

Another hope was to have "someone in school who could coordinate

services that would meet the needs of the 'whole child.'" This person would provide full-time assistance, information and direct service in the name of social service agencies. They would be located at the school and could address "real life issues such as AIDS and gang violence."

ANALYSIS AND COMMENT

In less than a decade, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School has been transformed into a local success story. Marks of achievement are everywhere. The number of students retained in grade been lowered to about ten percent. Suspensions have dropped by one third. About thirty-five percent of students score at or below the fortieth percentile on the Basic Skills Test. All this at a time when overall scores in Massachusetts are declining.

For Leonard and other members of the school community, the success of the school -- measured by success of individual students -- can be attributed to one thing: family and community involvement. While acknowledging the simplicity of solution, Leonard stresses that parent and community outreach remains "one of urban education's toughest challenges."

Under Leonard's leadership, the school is building a comprehensive parent involvement program. Unlike many schools with a narrow range of activities, the King supports and engages the help of families and community across a wide spectrum of ways.

The Parent Office is the hub of a program which reaches into classrooms through parent involvement in curriculum planning; joining forces with the community through partnerships with churches, etc; and with families through a home visitor program. The school philosophy defines a clear mission: "All children can learn. It is the responsibility of parents, educators, and the community to work together to teach them."

The comprehensiveness of the King's program is impressive given the fact that it exists in an environment where there are a number of serious problems including the following factors. The school is geographically isolated. It is part of a neighborhood which is described by Leonard as "deteriorating, impoverished and held hostage by gang members and drug dealers." It is assigned to a school zone which does not correspond to its geographic location. It is disconnected from the city's transportation system. There is no subway or bus stop anywhere in the school's vicinity.

It is part of a school system which is undergoing rapid change in some areas while remaining mired in longstanding problems in others. Governance of the city's educational system is in a period of great transition. The City Council recently voted to

abolish the school committee and to replace it with a seven member board appointed by the mayor. The school district has had nine superintendents since 1975. The system is in second year of implementing school-based management - shared decision making. While heralded as a great step forward for Boston schools, school-based management has gotten off to a shaky start. Implementation was delayed almost a year because of legal complications. Training for participating schools and system personnel was cut short due to shortage of funds. Recently, principals of participating schools sent a letter to the new Superintendent demanding control over issues such as funding.

The system has been criticized for holding onto policies, e.g. non-promotion, suspension, which encourage large numbers of middle school students to drop out.

Unique Strategies

The school's troubled economic and educational context has required a unique set of strategies. Instead of giving into the problems of the school's larger environment, Leonard has challenged them. While taking advantage of what the system has to offer, he has found support in resources not usually tapped, among the parents and local organizations which he considers a part of the school community.

Leonard sees outreach to parents and community as the key to the schools survival. He explains:

> "The logic that I use to determine the way I approach outreach is quite simple. I counted fifty teachers, 500 students, and about 1000 parents. My parent constituency is my biggest the constituency and they definitely have a vested interest in the school. I am determined to cultivate this constituency into an army of supporters. My ultimate goal is to involve every parent in the day to day operations of the school in some positive way. It is my contention that the more parents come in direct contact with the school the stronger that school will be."

Formal Policies Viewed as Hindrances

Leonard himself sees "formal policies" as hindrances. "...the challenge is... how to make [the school] work regardless of policies." When asked for examples he points to rigid hiring policies, rules about how to spend monies, and other norms set by central administrations.

While eagerly taking advantage of new opportunities, Leonard has grown somewhat cynical about how much formal policies can help children at his school. For example, he has serious questions about his school's participation in a much heralded school restructuring initiative. "What are the benefits of participating

in this program? What rewards do we get from spending the time and energy to do so?" Leonard asks with a resigned manner. How, he wonders, is this policy designed to make a difference to those who participate?

The question is being echoed by other participating principals. However, an observer wonders if a low expectation of what the system has to offer may not have self-fulfilling results. Has the belief that "the system has nothing to offer" limited the King from exploring all the possibilities for change. For example, the King has not sought relief from any system regulations which open door to more comprehensive restructuring at his school. Could it be that the "us against them attitude" which works well in some contexts prevents school from utilizing other formal policies fully.

When asked, Leonard was not aware of legislative revisions in Chapter 1 redirecting funds towards parent involvement. "It was never mentioned to me to use [Chapter 1] funds that way. This is the first time anyone said, "How about using Chapter 1 funds for parent involvement?"

He described there being a tradition and history of being "locked in" to using Chapter 1 funds for teachers. One gets a sense that a decision to use the money to hire a parent would be a break from this tradition, and a difficult one.

Thus, his understanding that "if you want to use these funds for people -- you have to use them for teachers," coupled with a lack of information new guidelines, may be an impediment to using some of the money in the way he sees as most productive: hiring parent staff. This is an area where there are more opportunities than are being realized.

Taking Advantage of What the System has to Offer

However, despite this perception of policy as stifling, it is clear that the King, led by Leonard, is doing well at finding and using resources. One gets a sense that the system is being used to its best advantage in a variety of ways.

For example, state Chapter 636 monies fund a position that is central to its successful parent involvement efforts: the parent liaison position held by Jackie Burnett. Both Leonard and Burnett agree that parent liaison position has been a major catalyst in making their program shine. Whereas in many schools the parent liaison responsibilities are closely circumscribed, the parent liaison at the King school is involved in planning and hiring.

Under Leonard's leadership, the school has found further support for its outreach program through participation in state and district level school restructuring plans. The school is part of district's school-based management plan. The school-based

management team - comprised of parents (elected by the Parent Council) teachers , the principal, a business representative form Shawmut Bank and a non-voting representative meet monthly to work out policy decisions.

The school is also one of six Massachusetts schools to be awarded a $30,000 two-year grant in 1988 under Massachusetts Carnegie Schools Program (adopted by the state legislature in 1985) The program helps support activities organized through the parent office.

Tapping the Resources of Families and Community

In the face of a state budget crunch, a city with a rising crime rate, and school system in the throes of change, Leonard looks closer to home for support for his parent and community involvement program. While Leonard clearly views himself as the guiding force behind the school (a picture of Martin Luther King, Jr. hangs behind his desk), his basic strategy is to insure that his vision (success for all children through partnership) is translated into action by every parent, teacher, and student at the school.

Leonard's skill at building a shared investment in the success of King school students is demonstrated in many ways. In words and action, Leonard is constantly making the connection between the school's outreach to families and community and the success of its students. "We must all strive to become a community of learners," he tells his school. The message is put into action in the programs which Leonard and the school community initiate.

Next year, a team of parents and teachers will meet monthly to plan curriculum. The project is an example of how the school's vision of success for all children gets translated into action. For most schools, parent involvement does not include involvement in educational planning (See Chapter 2 of this report). Decisions concerning curriculum traditionally have been understood as teachers' and principals' terrain. In contrast, Leonard and school staff expect parents to be active partners in every aspect of their children's learning.

Rather than planning activities to build partnerships between teachers and parents, Leonard taps the combined resources of his school community to plan programs for children. The immediate school community is the base which he uses to reach out into the wider community for additional support.

Like most League schools, the King is collaborating with a wide range of community support agencies, businesses and a local university. The difference is that the collaboration is clearly structured to help improve outcomes for children at the school. For example, a business representative from Shawmut Bank serves as facilitator for school's improvement council. The school's

collaboration with a local church has provided an alternative space for meetings and after-school classes. Even as it looks to other community organizations to support school programs, the school is quick to respond to community needs. As part of the part of the parent center, the school has a child and adult clothing exchange. During a recent bus strike which left most of the schools' students stranded, the school organized a parent car pool.

By tapping the resources of families and communities, Leonard has helped his school weather an increasingly troubled educational, economic, and social climate. "This school exists," says Leonard, "because parents organized and fought. When the new assignment was given and we were gerrymandered into the West Zone, that was the death knell for this school." Parents filled School Committee hearings when the issue was addressed and testified in support of retaining city-wide status. Not long after that victory was won, King Middle School parents were among those who filled the Committee room singing "We Shall Overcome," in protest of school budget cuts.

The school's shared vision has drawn parents and teachers together to advocate for children's needs. When the state threatened to cut state Chapter 636 funds which support the King's parent liaison position, a cadre of parents and teachers descended on the State House to protest the cuts. This past year, a citywide in-service day was held to allow each school to draft its own educational plan. Although the superintendent encouraged parents to attend, the King was one of the few schools in which parents and teachers worked together to get parents to turn out.

Some in Boston might say that the activism at the King school directs attention away from issues of student achievement. At the school committee meeting where King parents and teachers protested budget cuts, a school department official suggested that "This time, Leonard might have gone too far. This isn't in a protest march. This is the Boston public schools."

For Leonard and the rest of the school, advocacy is key to caring about children. Expectations for parents include being "actively involved in learning and modeling the skills required to effectively lobby local, state, and Federal authorities to make decisions that enhance their children's education." Marching on the State House, planning curriculum with teachers, staffing a parent center, teaching one's child how to use a calculator are seen as components of meaningful parent involvement. And, if the indicators are right, the sum is a school of individual success stories.

Chapter 5

NOTES ON PRIVATE AND CONTRAST SCHOOLS

In visits to several cities to gather data for mini-case studies of selected League schools, we also visited six private schools and four public schools we are calling here "contrast public schools." Both the private schools and contrast public schools were selected for us by an administrator in the school system. In the case of private schools we asked for help in locating schools of different kinds, either parochial or independent, reported to have interesting activities relevant to this study underway. In the case of public schools, we asked for schools which would provide some contrast to the League schools in the sense that they had moved more slowly or reluctantly toward increased family and community collaboration.

Our purpose in visiting private schools was not to construct a portrait or a mini-case study of the these schools and their partnership efforts, but rather to see what insights we might find that would help to illuminate the data in the League schools. Similarly, we were seeking to identify important points of contrast between these schools and those in the League. Our purpose was not to paint a picture of parent involvement in "regular" schools based on an extremely small sample, but rather to see if our visits would throw a different light on the data we were gathering in the League schools.

Our primary purpose in these supplementary field visits was to find material to supplement or sharpen our portrait of the League schools. Hence, we have integrated points of contrast into the summary observations and impressions in Chapter 5.

The private schools visited:

1. A Catholic parochial elementary school in Cleveland, Ohio, serving about 200 children in grades 1 to 8 from working class and low-income families, including about 40% African-American children.

2. A Catholic parochial elementary school in San Diego -- grade 1 to 8, serving about 250 children, about 20% Hispanic; 5% African-American.

3. A Catholic parochial school (grades 1-8) in Boston serving a nearly all-white student population, (99% white).

4. An non-residential independent co-educational academy with 1,600 students from kindergarten through high school in an affluent section of Dade County, with a minority student population -- Cuban, other Hispanic, African-American, Asian -- of about 5%.

5. A small (about 100 children, grades 1 to 6) community-based Afrocentric school in Washington, D.C. serving low-income and working-class African-American families.

6. An small after-school learning center in transition to becoming a full-scale school with an Afrocentric curriculum, in Washington, D.C.

The four contrast schools were public elementary schools in Boston, Cleveland, Miami, and San Diego. Each serves a primarily low-income and minority population. None was a part of a parent choice plan; each was a Chapter 1 school.

Observations

There are many differences among the private schools, but all express strong commitment to the importance of parents to their operation and all have explicit policies and programs in place.

One private school principal points out that public schools can and often do exist without much parent involvement, while in their case they couldn't exist without their families. Another private school principal asserts, "Every one of our parents has valuable skills, and everyone is an intricate piece of the puzzle." Each of the private schools relies heavily on tuition from parents. This fact appears to have a distinct impact on the school-parent relationship.

As expected, the League schools visited are distinctly different in terms of higher levels and more diversity of reaching out activities. However, the private schools in aggregate were also well ahead of the contrast public schools in the amount and diversity of collaborative activities reported. Administrators in all three kinds of schools used similar rhetoric about the importance of families in children's learning and the school's interest in and need for support from the homes. However, the principals in the League schools and the private schools stress strategies for building partnerships while the contrast school principals tend to stress the difficulties of getting parents involved.

The principal of a contrast school with many Hispanic children says, "We just can't get the Hispanic parents involved. They won't come out. They have too many problems." The principal of a League school in the same district with a similar student population reports successes with multiple activities in which Hispanic parents are involved in a variety of ways beyond meetings in the school, parent associations, and advisory committees.

An important feature of the League schools visited was that they moved beyond deploring the environmental factors in which their

school exists and have changed school policies and practices to respond to many of these factors.

The private schools all had clearly developed policies about parents and their roles in regard the school. In most cases, the policies were clear and limited primarily to providing help and support for the school -- money raising, volunteer help, supporting the school's objectives -- including its own ideology or value system -- with the children at home.

"They overwhelm me," reports the new principal of a Catholic parochial school. "They erased a school budget deficit with fund-raising and soliciting donations."

In two of the Catholic parochial schools parents are forgiven part of their tuition in return for hours of work in the school. The parent work assignments include gardening, janitorial chores, work in the lunch room, tutoring, assisting in classrooms, and painting.

We discovered an unexpected factor in several of the private schools. Substantial numbers of the teachers have or plan to have their own children enrolled in the school. This is in clear contrast to urban public schools, League or contrast, where teachers seldom live near the school and seldom have their own children in the school in which they teach. We have no data about the impact on collaboration of this dual status as parents and teachers, but present this contrast as an interesting point for further exploration.

The contrast public schools and the League schools have many similarities: location, the policy environment, school district economic and political conditions and problems. Two observed differences follow logically from the ways the two categories of schools were selected: a) the level and diversity of strategies of family and community collaboration and b) the visible physical presence of parents in various roles in the schools.

In addition, as noted above, the contrast school administrators seemed resigned to low levels of parent involvement because of their perceptions about the characteristics of the families and neighborhoods served by their school. Several of the contrast school principals expressed feelings of powerlessness in the midst of overwhelmingly adverse conditions. The League principals tended to stress things in the school that could be changed in order to overcome or ameliorate adverse environmental factors. In the next chapter we discuss the League principals' persistence in trying various ways to promote family and community collaboration.

Multiple and growing partnerships with community agencies characterize the League schools visited. The private schools report fewer such connections but still note them as important

and valued. The Catholic parochial schools tend to expect their families to look to their own church and church-related agencies for support. Some report organizing food drives. The contrast public schools have fewer connections with community agencies. In one case, the principal views these agencies skeptically and reports seeing these agencies primarily as trying "to make a buck" by coming to the school. He says, "The thing that really gets me is that we have all these agencies getting all of this money to do this stuff with parents and they are not doing enough. They need to become a part of the school community, part of a school restructuring team." This administrator is waiting for the agencies to "reach in." The League school administrators interviewed talk at considerable length about how they are "reaching out."

In another contrast school, the principal draws a clear line between the school's role (instructional) and children's and families' other needs that should be met by other agencies with the school not trying "to interfere."

The one school visited which serves an affluent population reported, perhaps unexpectedly, multiple connections -- usually through referrals -- with health and social agencies and providers such as psychiatrists, family therapists, drug and alcohol counseling services -- and seems happy to play an intermediary but not intrusive role.

In few of the private or contrast schools are parents reported playing or wanting to play important roles in decision-making or governance. An exception is one of the community-based schools in Washington in which a parent board makes decisions about programs and their implementation. None of the private or League schools complained about inappropriate parent involvement; two of the four contrast school principals did. "We can't get parents involved in policy. The parents who become involved do usually have an ax to grind. Or else they are there to get some perks for their kids." Those experts who talk about attitudinal and mind-set differences among principals as being important in setting the school's tone in relationship to parents, will find support in our limited comparison of League and contrast schools.

High levels of parent interest is reported in all of the schools visited, with the single and significant exception of most of the contrast public schools many of which reported low levels of parent interest. One parent in a contrast school said to the researcher in a group interview situation. "We want to participate in the school if he would only let us."

Our general observation about the centrality of the principal in establishing the climate regarding family and community collaboration holds across all of the types of schools visited; public, private, League, and contrast. However, in one contrast school another staff person interviewed insists that the

principal is not to blame (for low levels of parent involvement) but the central school office for saying that they support parent involvement but not doing anything about it.

The visits to the private schools suggest that exchanges between reaching out public schools and private schools interested in parent involvement could be quite fruitful. For example, public schools could benefit from the experience of private schools which have successfully identified and tapped the diverse skills of the families they serve. We encourage the League to promote such communication between its private and public school members.

The visits to the contrast schools make it clear that the League schools are different in important ways in regards to family-community partnerships from many schools in the same environment. District leadership could make a difference in helping principals and parent leaders in these schools act to overcome some of the barriers they now see to increased partnership. This could be done by using the leadership in League schools with advanced programs to help share ideas with other schools in their districts.

Chapter 6

WHAT THE PORTRAIT MEANS: IMPRESSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study is one part of the Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning's five-year program to conduct research, evaluation, policy analyses, and dissemination on family-school-community partnerships. The Center's mission is to produce new and useful knowledge about a) how families, schools, and communities can increase student learning and development and b) how to improve significantly the connections between the major institutions that affect the education and development of children from early childhood to adolescence (Epstein and Davies, Center Proposal, 1990).

The schools participating in the League of Schools Reaching Out are a laboratory for examining the effects of policies on practices, strategies, and results. They will contribute to the Center's work; they will use the results of its research.

A five year-program of studies based in these schools is planned. This report which we call a "Portrait" is the result of the first year's effort to examine the reaching out activities in these schools in their policy environment as the basis for more intensive studies in subsequent years.

The Portrait has been drawn from multiple sources of data: a mail survey to all schools comprising the League in the winter of 1990-91; telephone follow-up interviews with the principals of twenty-three of these schools; and one to four day site visits in nine cities. In these visits we interviewed school district officials, community organization staff, and talked with principals, teachers, and parents in nineteen League schools, six private schools, and four public schools selected for purposes of contrast to the League schools as they were reported not to be much involved in family or community collaboration. We also assembled documents from districts and schools and sought information through follow up telephone calls and correspondence.

It is important to note that the League schools were specially selected because they had already have made an important commitment to reaching out activities and may be among the leaders of schools in the nation with reference to family and community collaboration. But, even as leaders, the schools have some of or all of their programs that are in the early stages of development and success in terms of reaching all families in significant ways, encompassing all of the grade levels in the school, and in evaluating the effects of their practices on students, parents, and teachers.

These sources have provided us with many details about programs and policies as well as some broader general impressions. Our

portrait will be most useful to our readers and to our future work if it reveals both the close-up details and the patterns and insights that come when we step back from the details and add impressions drawn with more artistic license.

In Chapter 1 of this report, we noted important limitations in our methodology, but repeat here that the results of the survey (Chapter 2) and telephone interviews (Chapter 3) are based primarily on the reports of principals and do not reflect (with the exceptions of a few surveys completed by parents selected by principals) the perspectives of parents or teachers. The survey and telephone results are descriptive of what the principals report the schools are doing but do not systematically reveal how many families were reached with which practices, how well the programs are working, or their effects on students. Most of the schools included are elementary schools; ten schools surveyed included middle grades (grades 6-8). One of these was visited and reported on in as a mini-case study in Chapter 4.

We return to the basic questions of the study:

What are the strategies and programs of collaboration in reaching out schools?

What are the effects of formal and informal policies on the programs and strategies of family, community, school collaboration? What are the links between context, policies, and programs?

We begin with observations about two points of overriding importance in positioning the more specific conclusions in this chapter.

The Field is at an Early Stage of Development

Studies such as this one are constrained by the fact that the family-community-school partnership area is in an early stage of development. We observe that the work in the schools is at a beginning exploratory stage. We note that many policies affecting parent and community involvement (e.g., new state legislation to foster family support programs, changes in Chapter 1, local policies about parents on policy-making councils) are relatively new and in early stages of implementation. In addition, there is lack of clarity and agreement about key definitions and concepts. Words such as parent, family, involvement, community, collaboration, partnership, success for all, home visitors, family support, restructuring are used with very different meanings at the school level as well as among researchers and policymakers.

Just as importantly, the theoretical or research base for practices is often not present or articulated. There is typically little documentation or systematic evaluation of

programmatic interventions and insufficient time and money to correct this lack. And, there appears to be little discussion and exchange about policies, the relationships between theory, practices, and results within individual schools, between schools with similar needs and programs, and between the schools and broader research and policy communities.

This situation points to the need for continuing discussions within schools, exchanges among schools, exchanges between parents and practitioners in the schools and researchers, policymakers, and analysts, and exchanges of experiences and learning among researchers and analysts in this country and in other countries.

Out of such exchanges and continuing school-based research can come increased clarity of definition, evidence about results, and an understanding of the theoretical and research bases of practices. These results can contribute to the goal of more coherent and consistently understood and applied policies -- and more effective practices -- at all levels.

Much of the work of the researchers of this Center, its International Network of Scholars, and the activities of the League of Schools Reaching Out is directed at contributing to this goal, as is the work of other researchers and other national school reform networks.

We recommend the Center and the League continue to find a variety of ways to work with practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to develop this field of inquiry and practice.

Policies are plentiful, fragmented, and confusing

The Consortium on Policy Research in Education (CPRE) highlights this point in a recent newsletter:

> Our complex, multi-level governance structure, with a number of separately constituted centers of authority at each level frustrates purposeful coordination. The policy generation machines at each level and within each level have independent timelines, political interests, multiple and changing special interest groups, and few incentives to spend the time and energy to coordinate their efforts. As a result, policies compete, overlap and often conflict.... Over the last 10 years, policy fragmentation has worsened... (CPRE, 1991)

This statement rings true for the policy arena we are studying in this report. We observe that from the vantage point of the local school, state, and Federal rules and local policies and financial arrangements often appear confusing, contradictory, fragmented, and incomplete.

As we note in another Center report (Davies, Palanki, & Burch, 1992) the past decade has seen a plethora of state and Federal laws aimed directly and indirectly at encouraging or regulating family-community-school collaboration. Just in the past year (1990-91) there have been dozens of new state and Federal policy developments directly or indirectly having an impact on school level partnership activities and strategies including family support programs, the links between education and other social services, services for parents of very young children, and parent choice. This is very strong evidence of how fashionable this topic has become, although it is also a sign of the lack of coordination across policies.

Is it any wonder that "policy" is something that many school practitioners find intimidating and confusing? One principal told us "I feel like I'm in an ocean of rules and programs without any maps." Is it any wonder that we find something less than coherent and comprehensive programming at the school level?

The details of our study confirm the lack of what Susan Fuhrman of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education calls a "policy system" in the area of partnerships as in many other areas of educational reform. We will return to this point near the end of this chapter.

<u>Without exception, the schools studied are carrying out their reaching out strategies without a clear policy system or framework which fosters and supports a comprehensive effort.</u>

We also observe that the word "policy" itself appears somewhat baffling -- and even boring -- to most of the school principals we interviewed.

We conclude that "policy" is something of interest to policy analysts and policy centers -- and to us. Principals are interested in what rules and regulations get in the way of their daily work and of their achieving their own policies -- objectives. They are interested in sources of funds to hire staff and carry out activities and in complying with the requirements of their superior officers in the school system with a minimum of distraction from what they see as their main duties.

Most principals approached in this study were quite articulate about most of this study's topics and enthusiastic about reporting on needs and strategies, but strikingly silent when the topic of "policy" is raised as such. Forty percent failed to provide useful answers in the written survey when asked about which policies help and which hinder their reaching out activities.

Yet, it is clear as we discuss below that the formal and informal rules, statements, and objectives of principals have a strong policy influence. From survey responses, telephone interviews, and site visits, it is clear that the impact of external policies on school-level partnerships is strongly mediated by principals' views of these policies. In several instances cited in the mini-case studies, the principals see the external policies as opportunities for advancing their own objectives. Some appear to be "policy masters." In other cases principals see most of the external policies as nuisances or barriers, ignoring them when possible and "fighting" them verbally and seem ill-equipped to help their schools navigate in the "ocean of policy" in which they exist.

The strong policy role that principals play and their lack, in many cases, of understanding, information, or high interest in the policy area, suggests that ways should be found to provide principals in reaching out schools with information, training, and on-site assistance so that they can help their schools navigate policies. This Center plans to develop and publish policy manuals which will be designed to contribute directly to this objective.

The need for evaluation and research

The fact that the field is in an early stage of development and that there is a lack of a coherent policy system is compounded that there is still an inadequate base of research and evaluation about what policies, programs, and practices will work best under what conditions, and for whom.

Our study notes this missing link of evidence about which strategies are best suited for a particular circumstance. Our survey and site visits We have uncovered almost no program or policy evaluations focused on outcomes such as student learning or behavior, parent behavior, school policy, or practice shifts.

During our field visits, we learned that principals and school staff assume the benefits and values of their reaching out activities, relying on the general research and expert opinion about such benefits and values. But, there was little or no opportunity for documentation and evaluation.

Given the constraints of time and resources, no school can pursue all possible strategies; choices have to be made. It would be helpful if these choices among strategies could be made as much as possible on the basis of evidence about results and the realities of the policy framework in which the school operates.

There is a clear need for more systematic, focused study and evaluation

In an attempt to meet the need for more intensive research and evaluation, the Center is undertaking a new three-year study of which will address four questions:

1. What policies (formal and informal) have what kinds of results at the local and community level on the objectives and implementation of programmatic efforts to increase family-community-school collaboration?

2. What programmatic components and strategies do reaching out schools choose and how do they implement these? What factors, barriers, and policies impede or facilitate the implementation of such components? What are the actual costs of these efforts?

3. What are the effects of components and strategies that are implemented on children's and families' learning?

4. How can components or strategies best be implemented in other schools with comparable interests in "reaching out"? What is most transportable or transferable?

This study is being conducted in nine League schools selected from those League schools that applied for and received grants through the Institute for Responsive Education and that have agreed to participate in this collaborative research and evaluation effort with the Center. In each school a facilitator/researcher is working with a small action research team of teachers and parents to gather data. During the first year we a) are exploring the environment and the policy framework in the school -- national, state, and local; b) beginning to document the implementation of a program to determine whether what was planned was actually accomplished; and c) determining indicators and measures of effects and designing the study of effects.

In the second and third year of the study, we will continue the documentation of the process of implementation and study program effects.

Other researchers in the Center on Families are engaged in studies and evaluations which will contribute importantly to the base of research which will be of use to both practitioners and policy makers.

Conclusions and Impressions

There are seven topics that cut across the data collected from the reaching out schools and the contrast schools. Our conclusions and impressions are presented under the following headings:

I. Levels and Types of Activities and Strategies
II. Noteworthy Emerging Strategies
III. Noteworthy Program Gaps
IV. Program Comprehensiveness and Needs
V. Informal Policies -- The Dominant Role of the Principal
VI. Formal Policies
VII. Costs

I. Levels and Types of Activities and Strategies

A. Many reaching out schools are redefining themselves as community institutions by serving families and other community residents in a variety of ways and exchanging resources with other community institutions.

The extensive activities reported in the categories of "school support for families" and "collaboration and exchanges with the community" are evidence of this shift. In the mini-case study schools in the previous chapter, leadership for this shift came primarily from the principal -- informal policies in the form of objectives, rather than from any formal policy action. However, in many cases the principal is drawing on funding from state or Federal programs to make possible new services or is taking advantage of local school board pronouncements encouraging community collaboration.

This shift will hardly be seen as radical by those familiar with forty years of activity in the Community Education movement or with the Office of Education's War on Poverty Era "Urban-Rural School Development Program." But, it is clear that the shifting view of some school's definitions of programs is rooted in the principals' concern about the nature of social and economic problems faced by their schools' children and families. We heard from the principals this message (couched in a variety of words): "We can't reach our academic goals unless we help our community address social and economic needs."

Comments by principals and district administrators suggest that the troubled social and economic environment of the school is the root of the informal policy shift and the changes in strategies that the new policy impels. To quote one League principal, "In these times, if you care for the child, you have to care for the family. To care for the family, you have to reach out to the community."

This shift toward defining the school as a community institution is influenced by the changed national environment -- increased concern by national policy-makers, corporate leaders, and national organizations linking the urgent problems of schools and the urban underclass, loss of economic competitiveness, and threats to social stability. There has been substantial consensus that academic progress for low-income children can't be achieved

without addressing the social, health, and economic problems of the children's families and communities. Some important examples of studies and reports striking this theme are notably the Committee on Economic Development's Children in Need, the Grant Foundation's report entitled The Forgotten Half, several Children's Defense Fund studies, the American Public Welfare Association and Council of Chief State School Officers' Joining Forces project, and the highly-regarded and widely-discussed work of James Comer at Yale.

New Federal and state laws and public and private funding opportunities have emerged in this changed environment -- Missouri's state-wide Parents as Teachers program and increased flexibility in Chapter 1, for example -- which are enabling the school level shifts noted in this study.

Evidence of this important redefinition of schools' roles was not found in our small sample of private schools, with the exception of the two small independent schools based in the African-American community in Washington, D.C. Nor was it noted in the public contrast schools. As we pointed out in Chapter 5, while these schools exist in the same troubled social and economic context of their League member counterparts, their activities and strategies do not reflect movement toward redefining their role toward family support or community connections.

The shift in school role we have noted will be examined in much greater depth in the Center's study of interventions in selected League schools which began in late 1991. The study will allow for a detailed exploration of the environmental and policy connections for the new strategies in which schools are providing a variety of kinds of help to families. One of our questions to be examined in this study is if and how the schools reaching out efforts recognize and build on the strengths of families and communities at the same time as that they recognize their needs and problems.

B. The level and variety of reaching out activity reported and observed is high and impressive.

Much of this activity is reported by the reaching out schools to be "new" in the past one to five years. Although there is no firm baseline data from these schools, other studies show that there has been a large increase in partnership activities in recent years, paralleling the increased number of formal Federal, state, and local policies and funded projects which seek to foster this kind of activity and paralleling the greatly increased attention to the topic in conferences, educational journals, and the public media (Epstein, 1991).

The level and variety of activity in the private schools visited is also reported to be high and to have increased over the past few years. In the public "contrast" schools, there was, as

expected, considerably less activity and a narrower range.

C. All the schools use multiple strategies to communicate with families, but traditional strategies continue to be predominant.

Every school reported using multiple means to communicate with the families they serve. Despite the increase in level and diversity of activity much of the reported strategy remains within traditional boundaries, even among reaching out schools.

Many principals see special events and school to home communication as their most effective strategies despite the emergence of newer approaches such as parent centers, home visitors, and programs to involve parents directly in learning activities at home.

The private schools and the public contrast schools also reflected the popularity of traditional strategies of special events and communication -- open houses, fund raising fairs, report cards, parent conferences, and student performances.

It is striking to note that every surveyed League school reports seven or more communication media to reach parents. In the survey and field visits some League schools are seen to be exploring less traditional means of communication -- community weekly papers, cable television, community radio, bilingual home visitors, weekly "good news" notes sent home. These efforts appear in many cases to stem directly from the principals' decisions to stress a new objective (i.e., policy) of trying to reach and work with a wider parent constituency, including those families usually described by educators as "hard to reach." In some cases, including Miami, Cleveland, Chelsea, and San Diego, the policy pronouncements of city or district leadership is reported to have encouraged this new school level policy and the testing of less traditional approaches at the school level. In most cases, however, the principals' policies are being reflected in the new practices.

Many of the League schools report trying to adapt traditional communication to changed circumstances and audiences. For example, nearly all try to have some communication in the other languages significantly represented in the school's community. At least two schools in California report that they are informing the families in their community about their rights under the new Chapter 1 law. The practices of other schools suggest that they are relying less on written communication to communicate. Instead schools are reaching out through home visitors and in a few cases through community networks and institutions such as churches.

None of these less traditional practices, except for translating materials into other languages and providing interpreters at meetings -- are reported in the public contrast schools with lingually-diverse populations. The translation practice reflects

district rules about communication in other languages.

The study raises questions about communication strategies that our data cannot address. The Center's three-year study of interventions in selected League schools will allow us to examine in much more depth questions such as what communication strategies work for which populations and under what conditions.

D. Parent volunteering is a popular, low-cost strategy

The use of parents as volunteers is reported in all League schools, along with many programs which include other community residents and volunteers from outside the immediate area. Parent volunteering is also reported in all of the private schools visited, but not much in the public contrast schools. Two Catholic parochial schools visited in different parts of the country have a variation of the traditional parent volunteer approach: parents receive tuition reduction if they work for the school for a specified number of hours per year in a variety of helping roles from classroom aide to cafeteria and gardening work.

The range of volunteer opportunities noted in the survey appears to have broadened in some cases including such approaches as mentoring and inter-generational literacy projects. More volunteering opportunities are being created to meet the needs of working and/or single parents. For example, some schools report parents volunteering in school health clinics at lunch hour, at Saturday pick-up-report-card days, and at events where child care is provided.

E. Multiple advisory and policy councils exist in most League schools.

Nearly all League schools report the existence of one or more councils or committees; most report several. About a fourth of the principals in the survey cited these structures and/or parent associations on their list of most effective strategies; the rest of the mail survey respondents are silent about effectiveness. The few comments on this point suggest that some principals see the importance of these groups as information giving and two-way communication mechanisms, rather than playing a vital decision-making function.

A few principals report that the multiplicity of councils creates overlap and confusion. Only a few schools indicated that they were taking steps to increase the effectiveness of these groups through workshops and offering staff assistance.

Many schools report difficulty in involving in school improvement councils or parent association parents beyond a small corps of activists. This same problem was identified in the schools described in the mini-cases and in the contrast public schools

visited.

In the site visits we observe that parent participation in governance or advisory councils seldom seemed to be a matter of first-order priority to the principals, site staff, or parents.

In Miami, parent leaders involved in citywide or area councils reported considerable dissatisfaction with the inadequate attention parent participation on the councils received in pilot school-based management schools. Among the reported problems were less than broad-bases representation; ambiguous duties and limited powers for the councils; and opposition of the teachers' union to an expanded parent role in decision-making.

In one of the contrast public schools a small number of parent leaders reported great dissatisfaction about the school's site council, citing the principal's unwillingness to give the group any real role in the school and his domination of meetings.

The private schools visited all have some kind of parent association, but none has the network of advisory committees and councils. In none of these private schools was parent participation in governance reported to be either a priority or an issue. We did not delve into this matter in this study, but we can speculate that private school educators and parents have an unspoken mutual understanding that the parents exercise the ultimate power: They can exit the school when its policies or practices are not to their liking.

II. Noteworthy Emerging Strategies

The survey and field visits point to three developments in reaching out schools that we believe to be especially noteworthy.

A. Parent Centers are reported in half of the schools surveyed. Other principals surveyed report that they are considering initiating a parent center. Field interviews revealed that this idea has emerged in part as a result of the promotion of the idea by the Institute for Responsive Education, and in a few cases, the development was impelled by specific local policy. Dade County, Florida, for example, requires with school-wide Chapter 1 programs to provide an on-site headquarters for parents and parent outreach workers. The parent centers have many different names -- parent office, family center, parents' room, etc. -- and functions and in most cases appear to be in their early stages of development.

There were no examples of parent centers in the private schools or the public contrast schools visited.

The Center on Families has begun a new study of parent centers as a mechanism in reaching out schools. This will give us an

opportunity to explore in greater depth the local, state, and national policy implications of this phenomenon and to seek to determine what the results are in terms of family behavior and children's learning.

B. Family support programs are reported in more than 40% of the League schools.

This development reflects the widespread national interest in parent education and family support as suggested in the comments in Item I.A above. Some schools report drawing on the availability of family support models such as Missouri's Parents as Teachers, HIPPY, Cornell's Family Matters program, and on the studies of Harvard's Family Research Center directed by Heather Weiss.

Obviously there are plausible connections between school-level action and increased talk and action at the Federal and state about the need for links between education and health and human services.

The development also signals the severe human, social, and economic problems including homelessness, hunger, joblessness that exist in the communities of many League schools.

Credibility for the strategy is beginning to come from a variety of sources, including the recent policy paper by James S. Coleman of the University of Chicago, commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI). Coleman points out that schools were originally designed to complement and support the family's child rearing function. He writes:

> Although this task was a simple one as long as the family provided for most of its children' needs, with the weakening of the family, the school must change its character.... facilitating those actions of the family that can aid most the joint task of family and school in bringing children into adulthood. One primary way that schools can accomplish this is by devising ways to replenish the supply of social capital on which youngsters can draw. (Coleman, 1991)

The League schools we are studying may be well ahead of most of their counterparts in public school systems in applying these ideas whether or not they are aware of the work of Coleman and other sociologists such as Annette Lareau (1987) in regards the social capital theory and its relationship to parent involvement and school achievement. Coleman reminds administrators and staff that "strengthening children's resources in family and community is essential to their own success with children."

Home visitors are reported as one primary mechanism for family

support, along with workshops or parent education programs in schools. These efforts appear to be on a small scale and in their beginning stages but nonetheless a significant aspect of the role-shift of reaching out schools toward offering services once available in other agencies.

In addition to organized family support programs, the survey responses and mini-cases include dozens of examples of direct service programs operated by schools -- food baskets, low-cost food purchasing plans, adult and children's clothing exchange, GED and English- as-Second Language classes, immunization clinics, and self-esteem workshops. These are activities that have traditionally been offered by settlement houses, grassroots community organizations, and churches and other religious institutions.

The prevalence of these activities suggests that the philosophy of shared responsibility for children's development is taking root in many of the reaching out schools. There appears to be a new recognition on the part of these schools that, as one interviewed teacher put it, "schools make a difference by being part of the solution rather than part of the problem."

Family support activity was not reported in the private or public contrast schools visited. The implementation of family support programs will be one focus in the Center's in-depth studies in selected League schools.

C. Every League school surveyed reported at least one working partnership with a community agency or business.

A majority of the schools reported four or more such partnerships. Partners cover the full range of possibilities, including: universities, community colleges, corporations, local business, social and health agencies, museums and other cultural institutions, labor unions, civic associations, government agencies such as the post office and the military, and youth organizations. As expected the partnerships also range from small and informal initiatives to large-scale contractual arrangements, such as Boston University's management contract with the Chelsea Public Schools.

The kinds of national reports and pronouncements reported above in I.A have created an environment in which local initiatives have emerged. The corporate involvement in these kinds of initiatives is obviously reflective of the great spurt of concern about educational deficiencies and school reform by corporate leaders nationally and in nearly all cities. Adopt-a-School programs were among the first manifestations of the new business interest was fueled by business concern about having an adequately educated workforce to draw upon, about the country losing its competitive edge to the Japanese and Western

Europeans, and about social instability reflected in problems of drugs, crime, and AIDS. In the schools reported on in this survey, the simple "adopt a school" model predominates.

In addition, the needs of urban schools for help in times of tight budgets, limited resources, and external pressures for improvement appears to have led many principals to an increased willingness to reach out. This is clearly the case of the League schools. However, hardly any such partnerships were reported in the public contrast schools, despite the fact that these schools exist in the same social and economic context as their "reaching out" counterparts. Availability of outside resources and partners and high levels of need are apparently not always sufficient to impel the establishment of partnerships with businesses or other community resources.

The private schools we observed turned primarily to their own community -- families or their sponsoring churches -- for outside resources rather than to business or community agencies or organizations.

D. Emergence of special staff.

An interesting and important development which cuts across the six categories is noted in the survey results and the site visits. Most reaching out schools are finding ways to "put somebody in charge." New parent, community, or collaboration staff positions are being created to direct or coordinate emerging family-school collaboration activities such as home visitors, parent education, parent centers, and the people who are working in these programs. Epstein has noted that such family-school coordinators (under whatever title) "may be crucial to the success of school, district, and state programs to link schools, parents, and communities." (Epstein, 1991).

There is little information about how the costs of these emerging positions are being covered. This gap is related to the general point about lack of adequate information about costs and sources of funding which will be commented on later in this chapter.

E. Incentives as a support for the development of collaboration.

A second development which cuts across the six categories is the emergence of a wide variety of incentives reported in the reaching-out schools. These incentives state and Federal grant programs; mini-grants for teachers; non-monetary awards for teachers or parents such plaques, dinners, and other recognition; and contributions of goods and equipment from local businesses.

III. Noteworthy Program Gaps

A. Principals report little independent advocacy activity.

Survey respondents identified almost no community-based, independent advocacy groups involved in school issues. This dearth may reflect an actual absence of such groups or lack of awareness or interest on the part of principals in such external activity. Some principals reported that individual parents or community members were active as advocates for particular categories of children (e.g., special needs children) or programs (e.g., computers in the schools.)

We observe that the lack of reported organized community activism and advocacy directed at school issues means that one traditional community resource is not being tapped: the grassroots community as a support for school improvement or change. This appears to be significant gap if environmental pressures are seen as important to produce changes in policies and practices in bureaucratically-organized institutions such as the public schools.

One significant exception to this gap was discovered in the field visit to San Diego. A new independent parent movement has developed citywide in this city under the aegis of two organizations, the Parent Institute for Quality Education, with Latino leadership, and the Campaign for Parent Involvement, with African-American leadership. Both organizations seek to strengthen families and the capacity of poor people to help their own children. Both seek to inform their constituencies so that they can be more effective participants in school affairs and advocate for their children's interests. The Parent Institute's director believes that an aggregate of informed parents in the schools will be a force for school reform.

A local off-shoot of the citywide Institute has developed at the Sherman School in the form of the Organization dos Padres Latinos de la Escuela Sherman (OLP). As is recorded in the mini-case study in Chapter 4, OLP, with the facilitation of a staff member from San Diego State University, has already moved beyond training to become an advocate for the rights and interests of Latino children and their families. For example, they joined with the Institute to lobby the school district successfully to use Spanish-language achievement tests as an alternative for limited English proficiency students. OLP's initial organizing effort was getting a new roof for the school's open air lunch area.

It is not known whether the development of a citywide parent movement in San Diego or the independent parent advocacy organization foreshadows a broader movement in other cities or other schools.

The dearth of independent parent or community activism related to

the schools reflects the national school reform climate in which partnership is the theme rather than independent organizations with sometimes adversarial relationships with the schools as was often the case in the 1960's and 70's.

We have noted no Federal or state policies that encourage independent organizations to become advocates for school change. Most of the national reports and studies which call for increased parent or community involvement have to do with the other categories of involvement within the framework of collaboration. However, Secretary Lamar Alexander's strong interest in independent corporate efforts as in the New American Schools Development Corporation can be seen as recognition of the need for external community press for school reform.

B. Few strategies are initiated by or aimed at classroom teachers.

With some exceptions classroom teachers are not reported to be the primary initiators of family and community partnership activities. The mini-case study of the Comstock School in Miami points to one exception: a major program of parent education organized by teachers on their own initiative and sustained largely with teacher time. In addition, many schools do report that some teachers regularly make telephone calls and a few describe teacher efforts to send "good news" notes home from the classroom. More than half of the principals indicate that some teachers prepare teacher-made learning materials to send for use at home.

Few of the reported strategies appear to give substantial attention to helping classroom teachers develop new knowledge or skills or attitudes that would be more conducive to reaching out activities and providing them with other forms of support. In-service training and staff development activities for teachers are seldom noted.

Some exceptions should be noted: For example, in the three League schools that report the most comprehensive programs of outreach (See Chapter 2) attention is given to training and support for teachers.

Despite the fact that the idea has been promoted strongly by the Institute for Responsive Education on the basis of its two year Schools Reaching Out Project in New York and Boston, no examples of teacher action research teams were mentioned by survey respondents as a strategy for fostering school, family, community partnerships.

Lack of teacher time was cited as one of the barriers to effective partnerships in about one out of five of the schools, but few strategies are noted to adjust teacher or school schedule.

The field visits uncovered a few examples of concern about teacher involvement as one key to parent and community collaboration as so much research suggests (See for example, Epstein, 1983). In San Diego's Sherman School, Principal Cecelia Estrada talks about the importance of providing training and support for teachers.

At Boston's King Middle School high priority is given to developing cluster arrangements within the school to help more teachers become acquainted and work with parents. At Cleveland's Miles Park School, Principal Mildred Foster's informal policy of inclusion is observed as being actively extended to teachers as well as parents. There appears no great difference between the League schools studied and the public contrast schools or private schools visited with regards to levels of direct teacher involvement, except for the exceptional cases reported in the mini-case studies.

We suggest to the League and to others who are working to promote school, family, and community partnerships that they are likely to fall short of their goal unless ways are found to involve more teachers more directly. As a step in this direction, the League, working with Center staff in its study in selected schools, will introduce teacher-parent research teams both as a data gathering means and an intervention to encourage teacher involvement.

C. Partnership strategies do not appear to be closely linked to strategies for changes in curriculum and teaching.

A third gap we note is the lack of explicit comment about the connections between reaching out strategies and district or school efforts to change basic approaches to classroom instruction (e.g., more individualized teaching) or curriculum change such as whole language programs or programs to emphasize higher order thinking along with basic skills.) This is a point that requires much further investigation before anything substantial can be said.

One of the features of the new study in selected League schools will be an exploration of the effects of partnership strategies on instructional and curricular change. This seems to us to be of central importance as the overall justification for such a high priority on partnerships is the belief that they leads to increased academic success for children.

D. Many of the schools appear to be weak in Category 4 (Learning Activities at Home).

Epstein's extensive work in this area in recent years points to the idea that systematic home-learning activities by parents for their own children that are related to classroom goals require the leadership and continuing participation of teachers. As

indicated above even in the reaching out schools in this study teacher involvement appears to be low. The lack of attention to Category 4 activities may also be linked to continuing weaknesses in student achievement. Epstein emphasizes the link between Category 4 activities which are focused on the school's academic goals and student achievement related to these goals.

E. Need for policies and practices to address student transiency.

Many urban schools, including many of the League of Schools Reaching Out members, report high rates on student turnover and transiency. There is clear a gap both in policies and school practices to respond to the reality of mobility in many urban communities.

Policies that allow for continuity of services have apparently not yet been developed in many school districts or by many states. Arrangements could be made, however, for parent support or home visitor services to follow families who move within a district or across district lines within a state. Flexible student assignment and student transportation policies might also be developed to address the need to provide as much as possible for continuity of services for children and their families, despite highly degrees of mobility.

IV. Program Comprehensiveness and Needs

A. Few of the League schools appear to have programs that are sufficiently comprehensive to address the extensive and diverse needs of all the partners.

As noted earlier, planning and programming in the schools is in an early stage of development. Few have been able yet to move to a comprehensive approach -- multiple and integrated strategies geared to the widely diverse constituencies in the school and its community. In their present stage of development, most are only beginning to explore the relationships across categories. An example of such development would be strategies that address the question of how participation in school governance can be fostered by or linked to at-home family support services or opportunities for exchanges with teachers in Parent Center programs.

The typically spotty pattern in League schools reflects the fragmented policy context: Federal, state, and local. Where there are written district policies they typically stress two or three kinds of involvement. State and Federal laws and programs are also fragmented by target group (e.g., special needs children, Chapter 1-eligible children, limited English proficiency children) and typically authorize certain categories of program and not others (e.g., training but not materials). Piecing together multiple sources of funding and multiple legislative or program requirements is a daunting task for principals and their

staffs. Integrated, comprehensive planning is a hard to achieve goal even by those with special training and time.

We were impressed that the League schools described in the mini-case studies appear to be struggling to increase their programmatic efforts as the needs in their schools and communities grow more rapidly than their resources. In the Dade County school, for example, the annual turnover of students is very high; new children and families with pressing needs arrive daily at the school's door, much more rapidly than program resources -- such as home visitors -- can expand.

We were impressed that the principals in these schools were earnestly seeking more coherent programs matched well to children's, families', and school staffs' needs, but they were in a real sense swimming against the tide -- the tide being fragmented, conflicting, and changing formal policies. A major test of their leadership skill is their ability to capitalize on the existing policies to move toward their partnership goals. See Section V. below for further comments about the dominant role of principals as makers and implementers of policy.

The contrast public schools had narrowly-defined partnership programs in place and are not seen to be seeking more comprehensive or extensive strategies and are not likely to do so unless the external demand for such moves was increased by district policies or constituent pressure.

The two independent community-based schools appeared to be seeking comprehensive and coherent partnerships with the families they served, within tight constraints of resources. This goal is self-imposed and a part of their ideology rather than a response to formal policies.

The other private schools had clearly defined and limited programming reported to be satisfactory by the administrators, who would probably not see more comprehensive services or strategies as appropriate.

In future studies, we will examine the issue of comprehensive family-school-collaboration more closely. Our selected intervention in nine schools will gives us the opportunity to explore the following key questions. What are the factors which influence schools' decisions to initiate some parent and community activities and not others? To what extent are these activities integrated as part of a comprehensive school-level reform strategy? What specific combination of strategies can have the greatest impact on improved outcomes for all the students in the school, and under what conditions?

V. Informal Policies - The Dominant Role of the Principal

Informal policies appear far more potent than formal policies in their effects on day-by-day reaching out activities. The school's objectives, whether written or oral, appear to have a dominant effact. These informal policies in the form of objectives most typically come from the principal. Our study -- especially the field visits and mini-case studies -- underscores the dominant role of the principals who set policy by setting objectives, interpreting and enforcing or not rules and other formal policies, choosing what external programs and resources to seek, and monitoring policy implementation.

We observe that the backing of the principal appears to be essential in reaching out strategies because they require extra work on the part of school staffs and they represent clear deviations from the standard operating procedures in traditional schools.

We noted in our field visits several examples of principal leadership in initiating or sustaining a program. For example, the principal of the Miles Park Elementary Schools in Cleveland (See Chapter 4) started a GED program in response to a community need. She had parents who wanted to participate more fully in their children's education and in school activities, but were hesitant because their poor literacy skills and most were not high school graduates. By using her information about state and Federal programs, she was able to get a GED project started with State Adult Education Funds (largely Federal money administered by the state department of education). However, at the first class a few years ago only four parents showed up. She demonstrated persistence by going into the community to give information to community leaders and sought their help in recruiting. The result was a class of 53 parents. By the fall of 1991 there were two GED classes with 35 to 40 people in each meeting twice a week.

Interviews with contrast public school principals show a small but useful difference illustrating the point about persistence. Two principals reported having tried GED (or similar) classes to which parents were invited but "very few came." These principals concluded that there was no interest and dropped the project.

In two cities -- San Diego and Cleveland -- the visits to League and contrast public schools impressed the researcher with this point: Two schools in the same district share an almost identical framework, yet the level and diversity of their reaching out activities are dramatically different. One plausible explanation is that in the League schools a dynamic and committed principal is mediating the policy system and using it for her or his own policy objectives. In the other schools the principals are doing little about "reaching out," and focus their comments in interviews on the difficulties in their communities, the

characteristics of the low-income parents in their school, and the problems of having to try to deal with well-intended but unrealistic policies from the outside.

The language used by the principals in the interviews in the contrast schools was quite similar to that used by the League principals, language about the importance of parents and communities. The difference was much more in practice and strategy than it was in rhetoric.

From our very limited sample, we can at least speculate that within the same geographic and cultural environment and the same formal policy framework schools can look and function very differently with regard to families and communities.

VI. Formal Policies

A. Formal policies have had an impact.

Despite all we have said above about policy fragmentation and confusion, and the lack of positive response by principals to our inquiries about "policy," we conclude that there is a connection between the changed political environment about school reform and the plethora of new state and Federal laws which promote family and community partnerships and the increase in the level and diversity of reaching out activity.

The League schools have, in fact, responded in tangible ways to new policy conditions in order to meet the a new needs in their own schools and communities. On this score, they appear to us to be very different from the contrast public schools we visited.

Data from our multiple sources show that formal policies are having a significant impact on reaching out programs and strategies. In some instances the impact is described in largely positive terms. But many principals stress negative effects. In the survey and telephone interviews negative comments are more frequent than positive ones.

The evidence about positive impact was much stronger in the field visits, because we selected schools to visit from the written survey responses that appeared to have more comprehensive programs and because the visits gave us the opportunity to probe below surface responses.

Among the positive effects, the most important seem to be

* school wide Chapter 1 projects as a means for more comprehensive planning for school improvement and for using Chapter 1 funds for parent education and other kinds of parent outreach

* desegregation orders or decisions that require attention to racial and cultural differences

Among the negative influences of formal policies the lack of funding is the most commonly identified negative aspect of formal policies. Examples cited included requirements for translation without money to hire translators; press for parent workshops and meetings without funds for transportation or refreshments.

Other negative influences cited were

* union contract restrictions on teacher and custodian time
* lack of clarity about and complexity of policies
* lack of space for required or desired program activities
* inadequacy of transportation for children and families which creates a time strain for both parents and students

We have additional observations about the impact of two of the most important formal policies observed: parent choice and Chapter 1.

B. In a few schools, parent choice has a positive effect on reaching out programs.

Almost a third of the survey respondents indicated that parent choice was having a positive impact. Only 10% said the impact was negative, while about 60% chose not to answer the questions.

These are very limited data, of course, but they do point toward the claim of parent choice advocates: that parent choice creates more positive attitudes on the part of parents and an increased "sense of ownership."

Only one of the public contrast schools was a part of a substantial parent choice plan and no connections were made in that school between parent choice policies and a very limited family outreach program.

Two Center projects will give us an opportunity to pursue this matter in the next four years: 1) the study of parent information and parent information systems in Massachusetts, and 2) the case study evaluations of interventions in selected League schools. At least four of the schools in the latter study have significant parent choice policies in effect.

C. Chapter 1 is a good, but largely untapped policy-tool for strengthening family-school-community partnerships.

We conclude that Chapter 1 now has great potential to help schools which are trying to increase student learning by establishing partnerships with families and the communities. The changes made in the law in the Hawkins-Stafford Amendments of 1988 allow more flexibility and encourage using Chapter 1 funds to support the costs of parent education and parent involvement.

As reported in Chapter 3 of this report our telephone survey of 23 League principals and our site visits reveal that some schools are taking advantage of these changes in imaginative ways; others are not. However, many are not even aware of the changes and the opportunities they present. Some central office administrators are encouraging program adaptation in line with the changes; others are reported to be blocking change. Most principals don't view Chapter 1 as an important asset in expanding their family and community partnerships, but a few are demonstrating how it can be a major asset.

Several key aspects of the 1988 law were seen having an impact in some schools in this study including the fact that the law specifically lists parent involvement among those activities that can be funded and expands the availability of school wide projects.

But the barriers to capitalizing on the new potential of Chapter 1 were made clear by the telephone interviews. Nearly all of the principals report having little information about Chapter 1 policies and funding and little input into how the funds are used. "Don't talk to me; I don't know anything about Chapter 1," is an extraordinary comment from the chief manager of an urban school that receives more than $100,000 worth of Chapter 1 funded staff time and services.

About one-third of the principals indicated that they are unaware of the changes in Chapter 1; a few others reported reluctance by central office administrators to authorize any changes in the traditional Chapter 1 programs; and about one in five said that (despite substantial increases in Chapter 1 funds in nearly every district in recent years) that shortage of money would make it difficult to provide services to parents without reducing services to children.

Many of the principals say that tradition -- "the way we always have done it" -- seems to be the most powerful influence on how Chapter 1 funds are used in the school, but at the same time about two thirds of the telephone respondents report that a portion of the Chapter 1 funds are used for parent meetings and workshops.

The survey and the field visits uncovered a few good examples of the imaginative use of Chapter 1 funds to promote children's learning through various forms of family and community partnership. (See, for example, the mini-case studies in Chapter 4 about the Miles Park School in Cleveland and the Comstock School in Miami. Other examples are noted in Chapter 3.)

In California, there is an unusual and we believe significant state policy intervention to provide some coherence among Federal, state, and district policies on Chapter 1. Assembly Bill 322, known as the Waters Bill, requires districts receiving state and Federal funds such as Chapter 1 to develop parent involvement programs consistent with state policies and to extend the local policies to schools within the district that do not receive the Federal or state program funds directly. This is a direct effort to encourage local district implementation of the state's parent involvement policies.

On the basis of the mixed picture from our study on the utilization of Chapter 1 in League schools we suggest that state leadership (such as in California's Waters Bill) could be of great importance. Similarly, local district administrators need to act in a more timely fashion implement the 1988 changes in Chapter 1 at the school level.

We also conclude that extending the school-wide Chapter 1 approach to many more schools by allowing a poverty floor somewhat below 75% would enable many more schools to use Chapter 1 money for family-community partnership strategies that are directly relevant to increasing student academic success. This is an issue that will be considered at the time of Chapter 1 reauthorization in 1993.

The League hopes to intensify its information efforts to inform its member schools about the potential of Chapter 1 as a tool to promote partnership practices.

VII. Costs

A. We have little firm or reliable data about the costs of family and community collaboration activities.

Questions about costs seemed to be as baffling to most of our respondents as were questions about "policies" in general. We believe much of the cost data reported is not very reliable or useful. One third of the survey respondents left the questions about costs blank; others said they didn't know.

We have a limited number of observations on this matter, in addition to acknowledging the inadequacy of our survey in this important but still largely unexplored area.

1. Principals report having limited information and limited access to information about Federal funds available to their schools.

2. Most reporting schools rely most heavily on local district funds to support their reaching out activities. However, there is some ambiguity and possible confusion about what is meant by local and Federal funds. Some respondents appear to label locally-developed projects which involve Federal funds (e.g., Even Start) as drawing on "district funds" rather than Federal.

3. Some schools are demonstrating that continued multiple sources of funding are appropriate for reaching out activities at the school level. The few schools which reported comprehensive reaching out strategies also identified a range of funding supports at the federal, state and district level. In the mini-case studies we report several examples of using private funds to supplement the budget. Because of this complexity and the potential of multiple sources of funding, we suggest that principals, teachers, and parents be given accurate information about sources and technical assistance so that they can better identify and gain access to both public and private funding sources. Budget and funding is one area where a simplified policy/budget system would be enormously helpful.

4. We continue to think that it is important to try to get firm cost data, even though this survey did not achieve its objective in this regard. We will seek to do this again as a part of the intensive study in selected schools described in Section V. above.

FINAL COMMENTS

We conclude this study with a great deal of respect for the energy and commitment of the principals, staff, teachers, and parents in the reaching out schools. They are exemplars of the front line efforts in the nation's school reform effort.

We are also impressed that the resources available -- time, money, staff, better facilities, equipment -- are far from adequate to meet the pressing needs of these schools for program improvement and of their children and families for help and services. One example among many: the mini-case study school in Washington, D.C. -- nearly 600 students with no counseling staff, no social worker, no school psychologist, and no vice principal.

More resources are needed and more widespread application of the good ideas already available for partnerships and improving children's learning.

Our most important observation and conclusion is that all of the schools studied are engaged in substantial reaching out activity

without the benefit of a clear, comprehensive, and supportive policy system.

As we have pointed there are some important formal policies that are having a positive effective. But, a clear and coherent policy framework to support the local; school efforts is missing and is badly needed. A myriad of policies, programs, projects, rules, contracts, objectives exist now; and some of these can be drawn upon in useful ways. Susan Fuhrman of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education believes that a policy system is needed, if reform is to succeed" (Fuhrman, 1991).

We concur that a system is needed to provide the structural and financial links between Federal, state, district, school-level, and classroom policies and between what are now bureaucratically-fragmented systems of health, welfare, job training, social service, and education. Cross-jurisdictional funding would be possible and encouraged. State laws would be planned in coordination with Federal laws. New Federal laws to promote parent involvement would be linked to existing laws with similar intent.

Such a system would incorporate components relating to certification of educational personnel, accreditation of schools, teacher and administrator training, teacher assignment, staff development, parent choice and information. The desired system would offer positive incentives to administrators, teachers, parents, and community agencies and provide good information and assistance in the implementation of the policies.

Just as importantly, the necessary policy structure or system will position family, community, school partnerships in a broader context of overall school restructuring and educational and social objectives.

CPRE believes, and we concur, that state leadership is necessary to make such a coherent policy system possible.

> The policy structure is a function of state leadership. If we wish to influence more than a few schools or districts at a time, the state is a critical actor....States are in a unique position to provide coherent leadership, resources, and support to reform efforts in schools. (Consortium for Policy Research and Education, 1991, p.5).

The Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning expects to make a strong contribution to the research and evaluation that can be an important underpinning for a strong and more comprehensive policy system. We expect to contribute advice on policies as well as on practices.

This report is part of the beginning of that contribution.

APPENDIX A
League of Schools Reaching Out Survey

NAME OF SCHOOL:_____

SURVEY

League of Schools Reaching Out

WHY THIS SURVEY?

We are doing this survey so that we can share with you what other schools are doing to improve their own family-school-community connections.

The information which we get from you will be combined with the responses from other League Schools to produce:

* an ANNOTATED DIRECTORY (both in printed form and a computerized data base that you can tap into.)

* a report -- PORTRAIT OF SCHOOLS REACHING OUT -- for the National Research Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning which will give policy makers, researchers as well as League Schools an up-to date "map" of family-community-school partnerships.

HOW TO DO THIS SURVEY

The responses to Parts I and II of the written survey should be provided by the principal with the help of a parent program staff member (when applicable) and at least one "involved" parent.

Part III is an opinion section. This section should be completed separately by the principal.

COMPLETED SURVEYS should be returned IMMEDIATELY in the pre-paid envelope to:

Don Davies, Co-Director
Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning
Institute for Responsive Education
605 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
Phone: 617 353-3309 Fax: 617-353-8444

TELEPHONE FOLLOW-UP

If we have questions or need clarification, one of the three Center staff members who are working on this survey will call you soon (Vivian Johnson, Patricia Burch, or Don Davies).

SURVEY

League of Schools Reaching Out

I. ACTIVITIES

A. Please indicate Family (Parent) involvement activities which you have within your school (for each of the six categories listed below). *

TYPE I. SCHOOL HELP FOR FAMILIES (in meeting their basic obligations for the safety, health, love, and supervision of their children.)

Activity

___ Parent Education Workshops (A1)
___ Parent Center in School (A2)
___ Home Visitor Program (A3)
___ Homework Hotlines (A4)
___ Health & Social Service Referrals (A5)
___ Regular In-school Day Care/Child Care (A6)
___ GED or ESL classes (A7)
___ Other_____ (A8)

TYPE II. SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION

Activity

___ Scheduled or Informal Teacher Conferences(A10)
___ Newsletter (A11)
___ Announcements/Notices (A12)
___ Report Cards (A13)
___ Teacher to Parent Telephone Calls (A14)
___ Parent to Teacher Telephone Calls (A15)
___ Automated Information Phone Calls (A16)
___ Open Houses (A17)
___ Parent Handbook (A18)
___ Letters (A19)
___ Parent Information Meetings (A20)
___ Communication in Languages other than English (A21)
___ Activity Calendar (A22)
___ Parents pick up report cards (A23)
___ Home Visits (A24)
___ Other (A25)

Type III. FAMILY HELP FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

Activity

___ Volunteering in classroom or school(A27)
___ Participating in School Events (A28)
___ Tutoring (A29)
___ Serving as Parent Reps. (A30)
___ Helping on Field Trips (A31)
___ Office Work (A32)
___ Fundraising (A33)
___ Parents Telelphoning (A34)
___ Other_____ (A35)

Type IV. INVOLVEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Activity

___ Lending Library for books/toys (A34)
___ Workshops/Meetings on topics such as Reading/Math (A35)
___ Read Aloud Program (A36)
___ Parents check/sign homework (A37)
___ Home Visitors (A38)
___ Pre-prepared work-at-home materials for Parents to use (A39)
___ Teacher-prepared Materials for Parents to use in learning at home (A40)
___ Parent-initiated home-learning activities (A41)
___ Other_____ (A42)

Type V. INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE, DECISION-MAKING AND ADVOCACY

VA. Governance/Decision-making

Activity

___ PTA/PTO (A43)
___ Advisory Committees (A44)
___ School Improvement Council (A45)
___ Special Education PAC (A46)
___ Bi-lingual PAC (A47)
___ Evaluation Activities (A48)
___ Educational Advocacy Groups (A49)
___ Other_____ (A50)

V8. Advocacy: Promoting the rights and interests of individual and/or groups of children and families

Activity

___ Parent Teacher Organizations (A51)
___ Advisory Committees (A52)
___ School Improvement Council (A53)
___ Special Education PAC (A54)
___ Bi-lingual PAC (A55)
___ Evaluation Activities (A56)
___ Citizen-initiated Educational Advocacy Groups (A57)
Examples _____ (A58)
_____
___ Other_____ (A59)

TYPE VI. COLLABORATION AND EXCHANGES WITH THE COMMUNITY

Activity

___ Business Partnerships (A60)
___ College/University Collaboration (A61)
___ Human Service Agency Collaboration (A62)
___ Cultural Agency Collaboration (A63)
___ Programs with police, courts and other city agencies (A64)
___ Other (A65)

A66. Comments or explanations:

II. POLICIES

A. Costs

A1. What is the approximate combined cost (per school year) of the family (parent) involvement activities which you have checked in Section I.? Don't be concerned about being exact. We need only rough estimates _____ (C1)

A2. Comments or Explanations:

B. **Funds**

Please indicate sources of funds actually used for family (parent) involvement activities. Funds might cover portion or all of costs such as equipment.

Federal ____ (Ba)

Chapter I. ____ (B1)
Chapter II. ____ (B2)

Bilingual Ed. ____ (B3)
Aid for the Handicapped ____ (B4)
Family Support Act ____ (B5)
Other ____ (B6)

State ____ (Bb)

Special Ed. ____(B7)
Desegregation Funds ____(B8)
Programs for Low-income and Minority Children ____(B9)
Pre-school ____(B10)
Bilingual Ed. ____(B11)
Other ____(B12)

School or District ____

School-Based Management ____ (B13)
District Parent Organizations ____ (B14)
District Budget. ____ (B15)
School Budget ____ (B16)
Fundraisers ____ (B17)
Other ____ (B18)

Private ____

Businesses ____(B19)
Foundation ____(B20)
Other ____(B21)

B22. Comments or Explanations:

C. **Written Policy**

Is there a written policy on parent involvement in your:

School ____ (C1)
School District ____ (C2)
State ____ (C3)

(IF SO, PLEASE SEND US A COPY)

D. School Reform

Is your school involved in one or more types of school reform initiatives?

School-initiated?	____	(D1)
District?	____	(D2)
State?	____	(D3)
Federal?	____	(D4)
Other ?	____	(D5)

D6. Examples:

E. Parent Choice

Ea. Does your district have a parent choice policy that influences student assignment? If so, does the policy affect parent involvement at your school? Please explain.

III. Opinions

PLEASE HAVE ONE OF THESE OPINION FORMS COMPLETED BY EACH OF THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS

-- The principal

-- A parent coordinator or staff person

-- Two informed parents (family members)

Respondent Name _____

Title _____

Telephone number where you can be reached (____) ____ - _____

QUESTIONS

F. Are there any policies, rules or regulations -- local, state or national -- have helped or hindered your family (parent) involvement activities. (By policies we mean: laws, funding programs, regulations, union contracts, written requirement of the school district, rules about transportation, use of school facilities, insurance, etc.)

G. What one family or community program or activity do you think works best in building home-school-community partnerships within your school. Please comment briefly on evidence you have which supports this opinion.

H. What do you think is the greatest barrier to your moving ahead toward more effective family-community collaboration?

I. What strategies have worked best to overcome this barrier?

J. School Demographics

Grade Levels _____
Approximate Enrollment _____

Student Population Breakdown (%)

RACE		INCOME	
Black	____	Low-income	____
Latino	____	Middle Class	____
Asian	____	Other	____
Other	____		

APPENDIX B
Telephone Interview Questionnaire

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS:
Principals' Perspectives on Use of Chapter 1 Funds for Parent and Community Involvement Activities

Question 1: On your survey, you identified Chapter 1 as one source of funds for your parent involvement program. Could you briefly describe the process for applying for Chapter 1 funds and what your role is? What kinds of information does the central administration ask for? Do they send out a memorandum requesting information for Chapter 1 or is there a specific policy? What specific programs are Chapter 1 funds being used for?

Question 2: How did you decide to use Chapter 1 funds? Are you doing anything different with Chapter 1 funds?

Question 3: Have the recent changes in Chapter 1, which say parents need to be more involved and that schools can use funds for schoolwide projects, affected you decisions on parent involvement programs or design?

Question 4: What are your specific goals around parent/community involvement? Are Chapter 1 funds related to these goals?

Question 5: Are there any rules and regulations which are either helping or coming in the way of your using Chapter 1 funds for parent involvement?

APPENDIX C
Site Visit Report Form

COMMUNITIES, SCHOOLS
& CHILDREN'S LEARNING

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION 605 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE BOSTON MA 02215 617-353-3309 FAX 617-353-[illegible]
INSTITUTE FOR RESPONSIVE EDUCATION

SITE VISIT REPORT FORM

Project 1.10 A

Researcher _____

School _____

Location _____

Date _____

I. SETTING/CONTEXT/COMMENTS:

II. HISTORY

IIA. When did the idea of building parent involvement within your school first take root and how long did it take to gain support and funding? What person or group was responsible for developing and articulating the idea?

IIB. Are there similarities between your parent involvement program and those found in other schools or agencies in your district? Did you model your program after another?

III. SCHOOL REFORM OBJECTIVES

IIIA. What are the most important objectives for your school related to student success (academic achievement, attendance, student behavior, etc.)?

IIIB. What are the major problems that are keeping some students from achieving?

IIIC. What current evidence do you have about student success in your school? Are there any links between this evidence and what you're trying to do in the community?

IV. FUNDS

IVA. What source of funds or combination of funds (local, state, federal) supports your parent involvement program(s)? Which funds or combination of funds have you drawn upon most consistently?

V. POLICY

VA. Which policies/rules/regulations have helped or hindered your parent involvement program? What stands in your way? What moves you forward?

VB. Where do you hope to be in a year or two? What kinds of things do you need to change in order to get there?

(If time)

V. LEAST WELL-CONNECTED PARENTS

VA. In your opinion, which kinds of parents/families have the least connection with the school? Why is this?

VB. What have you tried that seems to work? What are you thinking about trying?

VC. What is the greatest barrier to increasing linkages with families?

VD. Why is this? What strategies have you used to overcome?

APPENDIX D
Schools Participating in Study

LEAGUE OF SCHOOLS REACHING OUT; LIST OF SCHOOLS INCLUDED IN STUDY

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles Unified School District
Sylmar Elementary School
13291 Phillippi Avenue
Sylmar, CA 91342
Contact: Irene Smerigan, Principal

Vaughn Street School
13330 Vaughn Street
San Fernando, CA 91340
Contact: Yvonne Chan, Principal*
(818) 896-7461

Woodcrest Elementary School
1151 W. 109th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90044
Contact: Delores Weber, Principal
(617) 756-1371

Horton Elementary School
5050 Guymon Street
San Diego, CA 92113
Barry A. Bernstein, Principal*
(619) 264-0171

Memorial Academy
2850 Logan Avenue
San Diego, CA 92113
Carol Wiliams, Vice Principal* or
Robert Grano, Resource Teacher
(619) 525-7400

Pacific Beach Middle School
4676 Ingraham Street
San Diego, CA 92109
Contact: Charmaine Del Principe, Principal*
(619) 273-9070 ext. 205

Matthew Sherman Elementary School**
450 24th Street
San Diego, CA 92102
Contact: Cecilia Estrada, Principal*
(619) 525-7425

* Principals who participated in telephone interviews.
** Site of field visit.

Torrey Pines Elementary School
8350 Cliffridge Avenue
La Jolla, CA 92037
Chelita Flores, Principal*
(619) 453-2323

Valencia Park Center for Academics, Drama, & Dance
5880 Skyline Drive
San Diego, CA 92113
Diana G. Shipley, Principal
(619) 262-0125

Montgomery Junior High School
Sweetwater School District
1051 Picador Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92154
Contact: Anne Benedict, Parent Volunteer Coordinator
or Liz LeBron, Principal
(619) 691-5440 (school)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Shaed Elementary School**
3rd & Douglas Sts, NE
Washington, DC 20002
Contact: Brenda T. Richards, Principal*
(202) 576-6052 or (201) 350-8431
FAX# 576-6455

FLORIDA

Comstock Elementary School**
2420 N.W. 18th Ave
Miami, FL 33142
Contact: Bertha Pallin*
(305) 635-7341

Kate Sullivan Elementary School
927 Miccosukee Road
Tallahassee, FL 32308
Contact: Nancy Duden, Principal
(904) 487-1216

INDIANA

Thomas D. Gregg School, IPS #15
2302 East Michigan Street
Indianapolis, IN 46201
Contact: Karen Kremer, Principal
(317) 226-4215

MASSACHUSETTS

Back-to-School Program
Shelburne Recreation Building
2730 Washington Street
Roxbury, MA 02119
Contact: Ellen Spiegel
(617) 635-5213

David A. Ellis School
302 Walnut Avenue
Roxbury, MA 02119
Contact: Carlos Gibb, Principal
(617) 445-1110

Sarah Greenwood School
189 Glenway Street
Dorchester, MA 02121
Contact: Isabel Mendez, Principal*
(617) 436-7690

Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School**
77 Lawrence Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02121
Contact: Steven Leonard, Principal* or
Jackie Burnett, Parent Coordinator
(617) 445-4120

Mary Lyon Early Learning Center
50 Beechcroft Street
Brighton, MA 02135
Contact: Peg Hoban, Director
(617) 254-6672, (617) 254-2373

Patrick O'Hearn School
1669 Dorchester Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02122
Contact: William Henderson, Principal
(617) 282-3178

Woodrow Wilson Middle School
18 Croftland Avenue
Dorchester, MA 02124
Contact: Rosalyn Brown, Principal*
(617) 288-4730

Graham & Parks Alternative Public School
15 Upton Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
Contact: Ann Bolger, Parent Coordinator, (617) 349-6613 or
Leonard Solo, Principal, (617) 349-6612

Chelsea Early Learning Center
190 Nichols Street
Chelsea, MA 02150
Contact: Irma Napoleon, Director*
(617) 389-0143

Mary C. Burke School
220 Spencer Avenue
Chelsea, MA 02150
Contact: John T. Andreadis, Principal
(617) 887-0811

Shurtleff School
76 Congress Avenue
Chelsea, MA 02150
Contact: Carol Murphy, Principal* or
Oriana Ocasio
(617) 889-2258

Williams Elementary School
Walnut Street
Chelsea, MA 02150
Contact: Janet Healy, Principal*
(617) 889-2310 or 884-3654

Williams Middle School
Walnut Street
Chelsea, MA 02150
Contact: Anthony DiGregorio, Principal*
(617) 889-2310

MISSOURI

Early Education Program
Ferguson-Florissant School District
1005 Waterford Drive
Florissant, MO 63033
Contact: Marion M. Wilson, Director
(314) 831-8798
FAX#: (314) 831-1525

NEW JERSEY

School Number Five
690 Cortland Street
Perth Amboy, NJ 0886?
Contact: Rose M. Lopez, Principal*
(201) 826-3360, ext. 550,
FAX# (201) 826-2644

NEW YORK

Community School 92 - CSD #12
700 East 179th Street
Bronx, NY 10457
Contact: Brenda Carrasquillo-Silen, Principal
(212) 731-7900
FAX#: (212) 294-1561

P.S. 111 - CSD #2
440 West 53rd Street
New York, NY 10019
Contact: Robert Kinzelberg, Principal*
(212) 582-7420

P.S. 146 - CSD #4
421 E. 106 Street
New York, NY 10029
Contact: Mamie L. Johnson, Principal*
(212) 860-5877

P.S. 194 (Raoul Wallenberg School) - CSD #22
Avenue W & Knapp Street
Brooklyn, NY 11229
Contact: Myrna Neugesser, Principal* or
Lenore Weinstock, Chapter Chairperson
(718) 648-8804

OHIO

Alexander Hamilton Intermediate School
3465 East 130th Street
Cleveland, OH 44120
Contact: Joseph Takacs, Principal
(216) 561-3880

Middle College
2900 Community College
Cleveland, OH 44115
Contact: Florence Williams, Principal or Mark Kasunic
(216) 987-4212

Miles Park Elementary School**
4090 East 93rd Street
Cleveland, OH 44105
Contact: Mildred O. Foster, Principal*
(216) 341-1585

Adlai Stevenson Elementary School
3938 JoAnn Drive
Cleveland, OH 44122
Contact: Charles K. Russo, Principal*
(216) 751-3443 or 751-2028

RHODE ISLAND

Grove Avenue Elementary School
100 Grove Avenue
East Providence, RI 02914
Contact: Diane E. Santos, Principal*
(401) 437-0750 ext. 213
FAX# 401-437-1930

TENNESSEE

Parenting Teen Program
Comprehensive Pupil Services Center
1266 Poplar Avenue
Memphis, TN 38104
Contact: Joyce S. North, Director or John W. White, Principal
(901) 722-4412
FAX# 901-722-4418

TEXAS

Barron Elementary School
3300 Avenue P
Plano, TX 75074
Contact: Mary McKenzie, Principal
(214) 423-7330

VIRGINIA

Fairfield Court Elementary School
2510 Phaup Street
Richmond, VA 23222
Contact: Elizabeth Byrd-York, Principal*
(804) 780-4639 or Ronald Robertson, Project
Director (804) 780-7800

WISCONSIN

La Follette Elementary School
3239 N. 9th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53206
Contact: Gwendolyn Y. Sullivan
Parent Involvement Coordinator
Milwaukee Public Schools
5225 West Vliet Street
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(414) 475-8272

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Date Filmed
August 12, 1992